



RIO DELL CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
RECEPTION FOR RETIRING CITY CLERK - 5:00 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING - 6:00 P.M.
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 03, 2026

City Council Chambers
675 Wildwood Avenue, Rio Dell

Welcome - Copies of this agenda, staff reports and other material available to the City Council are available at the City Clerk's office in City Hall, 675 Wildwood Avenue and available on the City's website at cityofriodell.ca.gov. Your City Government welcomes your interest and hopes you will attend and participate in Rio Dell City Council meetings often.

City Council meetings are held in City Hall Council Chambers for in-person public attendance. The public may also attend these meeting virtually through Zoom.

Public Comment by Email:

In balancing the need to conduct government in an open and transparent manner, public comment on agenda items can be submitted via email at publiccomment@cityofriodell.ca.gov. Please note the agenda item the comment is directed to (example: Public Comments for items not on the agenda) **and email no later than one-hour prior to the start of the Council meeting**. Written comments will be submitted to the City Council and included in the meeting minutes as part of the public record. Meeting can be viewed on Access Humboldt's website at <https://www.accesshumboldt.net/>. Suddenlink Channels 10, 11 & 12 or Access Humboldt's YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/accesshumboldt>.

Zoom Public Comment:

When the Mayor announces the agenda item that you wish to comment on, call the conference line and turn off your TV or live stream. Please call the toll-free number **1-888-475-4499**, enter meeting **ID 987 154 0944** and press star (*) 9 on your phone – this will raise your hand. You will continue to hear the meeting on the call. When it is time for public comment on the item you wish to speak on, the Clerk will unmute your phone. You will hear a prompt that will indicate your phone is unmuted. Please state your name and begin your comment. You will have 3 minutes to comment.



In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), if you require special assistance to participate in this meeting, please get in touch with the Office of the City Clerk at (707) 764-3532. Notification 48 hours before the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting. Assistive listening devices are now available for the hearing-impaired. Please see the City Clerk for a receiver.

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

D. CEREMONIAL MATTERS

1. 2026/0203.01 - Proclamation Honoring the Retirement of City Clerk Karen Dunham

E. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

This time is for persons who wish to address the Council on any matter not on this agenda and over which the Council has jurisdiction. As such, a dialogue with the Council or staff is not allowed under the Ralph M. Brown Act. Items requiring Council action not listed on this agenda may be placed on the next regular agenda for consideration if the Council directs, unless a finding is made by at least 2/3 of the Council that the item came up after the agenda was posted and is of an urgency nature requiring immediate action. Please limit comments to a maximum of 3 minutes.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR

The Consent Calendar adopting the printed recommended Council action will be enacted with one vote. The Mayor will first ask the staff, the public, and the Councilmembers if there is anyone who wishes to address any matter on the Consent Calendar. The matters removed from the Consent Calendar will be considered individually following action on the remaining consent calendar items.

1. 2026/0203.02 - Approve Minutes of the January 20, 2026 Regular Meeting **(ACTION)** - Pg. #4
2. 2026/0203.03 - Authorize the City Manager to Appoint Finance Director Travis Sanborn as Acting City Manager During Periods of Temporary Absence or Disability **(ACTION)** - Pg. #10
3. 2026/0203.04 - Receive and File the 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report **(ACTION)** - Pg. #11

G. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

H. REPORTS/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

1. 2026/0203.05 - City Manager/Staff Update **(RECEIVE & FILE)** - Pg. #31

I. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS/STUDY SESSIONS

J. SPECIAL CALL ITEMS/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. 2026/0203.06 - Authorize the City Manager to Award the Bid for the Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement Project to Mercer Fraser Co., Inc. for \$1,570,283.50 and Authorize the City Manager to Enter into a Construction Agreement with Mercer Fraser Co. in Coordination with the City Attorney **(DISCUSSION/ POSSIBLE ACTION)** – Pg. #36

K. ORDINANCES/SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

- [1.](#) 2026/0203.07 - Approve Resolution No. 1662-2026 Updating the Wastewater Strength Classification System **(DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION)** - Pg. #44

L. COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMUNICATIONS

M. ADJOURNMENT

*The next regular City Council meeting is scheduled for
Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.*

**RIO DELL CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 20, 2026**

Mayor Garnes called the regular meeting of the Rio Dell City Council to order at 4:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: (Closed Session) Mayor Garnes, Mayor Pro Tem Carter, Councilmembers Wilson and Woodall, City Manager Knopp, and City Attorney Gans

Present: (Regular Meeting) Mayor Garnes, Mayor Pro Tem Carter, Councilmembers Orr, and Wilson

Absent: Councilmember Woodall (excused)

Others Present: City Manager Knopp, Chief of Police Phinney, Finance Director Sanborn, Wastewater Superintendent Moore, City Clerk Dunham, and Senior Fiscal Assistant Maciel

Absent: Water/Roadways Superintendent Jensen and Community Development Director Caldwell (excused)

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

Public Employee Performance Evaluation – Title: City Manager – Gov’t Code 54957

RECESS INTO CLOSED SESSION

The Council recessed into closed session at 4:30 p.m. to discuss the above listed item.

RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

The Council reconvened into open session at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Garnes announced that there was nothing to report from the closed session.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Garnes invited public comments on non-agenda matters.

Rick Pehlren addressed the Council and thanked them for being cognizant of the needs of seniors in the community and for their support of the senior exercise group. He also commented that he had concerns about the water diversion from Lake Pillsbury and expressed interest in knowing how that is going and perhaps being involved in the conversations.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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Mayor Garnes asked if any council member, staff, or members of the public would like to remove any item from the consent calendar for separate discussions. No items were removed.

A motion was made by Carter/Orr to approve the consent calendar, including the following items:

- 1) Approve Minutes of January 6, 2026, Regular Meeting,
- 2) Adopt Resolution No. 1656-2026 Approving Appointment of Representatives to Small Cities Organized Risk Effort (SCORE),
- 3) Adopt Resolution No. 1657-2026 Approving Designation of Representatives to the PACE JPA Board of Directors,
- 4) Authorize the City Manager to Draft and Execute a One-Year Extension of the On-Call City Engineering Agreement with GHD, Inc.,
- 5) Adopt Resolution No. 1659-2026 Authorizing the Early Order of One (1) Police Patrol Vehicle Due to Operational Necessity and Extended Manufacturer Lead Times,
- 6) Adopt Resolution No. 1661-2026 Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Certificate of Acceptance for Sewer Easements for the Painter Street Sewer Line Upsizing, and
- 7) Receive and File Check Registers for November and December 2025.

The motion carried 4-0.

REPORTS/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

City Manager/Staff Update

City Manager Knopp provided highlights of the staff update and commended the police department and the Community Service Officers (CSO's) for the recent nuisance abatement of 520 First Ave.

He then reported that the Parametric Earthquake Insurance coverage for the city is expected to commence on July 1, 2026. Related to the solid waste franchise agreement, he reported that negotiations are moving forward with the expectation to see significant progress made over the next two weeks. The July 1st date for implementation of the new franchise agreement is questionable but is not a concern to Rio Dell since the city is not under any corrective action plan with Cal Recycle as are the other jurisdictions. Also, the city's current franchise agreement remains in effect until the end of 2026.

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Mayor Pro Tem Carter commented that there were zero cats, 1 dog and 9 ducks transported to Miranda's Rescue over the past two weeks.

SPECIAL CALL ITEMS/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

Adopt Resolution No.1658-2026 Authorizing the Chief of Police to Submit a Grant Application to the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and Authorizing the Chief of Police to Execute all Related Documents

Chief of Police Phinney provided a staff report and said that the proposed resolution authorizes the Chief of Police to submit a grant application to the California Highway Patrol for funding under the Cannabis Tax Fund Grant Program (CTFGP) to obtain \$160,000 for projects that address driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs, including cannabis. The grant funding will support enforcement activities in addition to officer training, prevention efforts, and equipment directly related to impaired driving enforcement. He noted that there is no grant match of funds by the city.

Councilmember Wilson asked if officers would be required to go away for training or if it would occur locally.

Chief of Police Phinney said that there is a wide variety of cannabis and other drug- based trainings available to officers, most of which are out of the area, but this grant provides funding for training and travel related expenses.

Councilmember Wilson said in 2016 when cannabis was legalized, he recalled funds being allocated for training and equipment to identify cannabis impairment.

Chief of Police Phinney explained that currently there is no state identified threshold established for the level of THC in someone's system. He said that a blood test will measure how many parts per million of THC exist but as far as what that is and how it affects a person's ability to operate a vehicle comes down to the officer's observance of the level of impairment. The grant will provide additional training to officers so they will know how to better identify impairment.

Mayor Garnes called for public comments on the resolution.

Rick Pehlren commented that it seems that it would be hard to enforce without having the criteria for accessing the level of impairment noting that people react differently to cannabis. Establishing uniform criteria for determining the level of impairment would be beneficial.

Chief of Police Phinney commented that the more training officers have, the better equipped they will be to judge impairment.

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A motion was made by Carter/Orr to adopt Resolution No.1658-2026 authorizing the Chief of Police to submit a grant application to the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and authorizing the Chief of Police to execute all related documents. The motion carried 4-0.

Authorize the City Manager to Award the Eel River Trail Accessibility Ramp Project to Hooven & Co. for \$680,835.70 and Authorize the City Manager to Enter into a Construction Agreement with Hooven & Co., in Coordination with the City Attorney and Authorize the City Manager to Execute Change Orders up to a Total Not to Exceed \$1,200,000, and to Execute Scope of Services with GHD for an Amount of \$120,611.00
City Manager Knopp provided a staff report and said that on August 28, 2025, the California Wildlife Conservation Board awarded \$1,200,000 to the City of Rio Dell for the Eel River Trail Accessible Ramp Project. The ramp was originally part of the original scope of the Clean California Grant, but it had to be removed due to the bids coming in over budget.

He said that the resolution, if approved will authorized the award of the project to the low bidder, Hooven & Co., in the amount of \$680.835, and also approve GHD to oversee the construction management, inspection and environmental services needed for the project to be completed. He pointed out the importance of the timing of the project as the contractor will need to begin prepping the site before the 2026 bird nesting season which begins in March, to reduce the probability of delays and cost increases.

Mayor Garnes asked if there was a design provided for the project.

City Manager Knopp indicated that the design of the accessibility ramp was included in the original scope and explained that the design is a hybrid between ramps and stairs.

Mayor Garnes called for public comments on the proposed project.

Rick Pehlren asked if the trail is part of the Great Redwood Trail.

City Manager Knopp said that the trail is seen as a spur of the Great Redwood Trail but that the trail was constructed on this side of the Eel River as the bluff side of the river is tricky to navigate. He said that continuation of the Great Redwood Trail would likely come through the Rio Dell proper.

Mayor Garnes commented that she can't guarantee that there will never be a trail on the bluff side of the river.

A motion was made by Carter/Orr to authorize the City Manager to award the Eel River Trail Accessibility Ramp Project to Hooven & Co. for \$680,835.70 and authorize the City Manager to enter into a Construction Agreement with Hooven & Co., in coordination with the City Attorney and authorize the City Manager to execute change orders up to a total not to exceed \$1,200,000, and to execute Scope of Services with GHD for an amount of \$120,611.00.

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The motion carried 4-0.

ORDINANCES/SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

Second Reading (by title only) and Adoption of Ordinance No. 420-2026 Amending Section 15.05.020 "Building Codes" of the Rio Dell Municipal Code (RDMC) to Reference the 2025 California Building codes and the 2024 International Property Maintenance Code

City Manager Knopp provided a staff report and explained that it is a standard requirement by State mandate to adopt the new building codes every three (3) years. Staff recommended approving the second reading (by title only) and adoption of Ordinance No. 420-2026.

Mayor Garnes called for public comments on the proposed ordinance. No comments were received.

A motion was made by Carter/Orr to approve the second reading (by title only) and adoption of *Ordinance No. 420-2026 Amending Section 15.05.020 "Building Codes" of the Rio Dell Municipal Code (RDMC) to Reference the 2025 California Building codes and the 2024 International Property Maintenance Code.*

The motion carried 4-0.

COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMUNICATION

Mayor Pro Tem Carter reported on upcoming meetings and events and said that Wildwood Days planning is already underway, and they are looking for community input on a theme for this year's event. She encouraged anyone with an idea to go to the Chamber of Commerce website and complete the survey and express ideas for a theme.

She reported that she would be attending a Cal Cities Community Services Policy Committee meeting in Sacramento on Thursday, announced there would be a Nuisance Advisory Committee meeting here tomorrow at 3:00 p.m., and later next week she would be attending the Community Organization Active Disasters (COAD) retreat.

She then gave a shoutout to Sarah Reback and the Community Resource Center for all the wonderful services they provide to the community and encouraged anyone who has not stopped by the Resource Center to do so as it is a light in the darkness for a lot of people.

Councilmember Orr jokingly thanked staff for getting the vicious ducks off the streets.

Councilmember Wilson reported that he would be attending a Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) meeting on Thursday and said it will be interesting to hear about the

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meeting with Congressman Huffman regarding the funding for windmill projects. He noted that the current administration is not in favor of windmills.

Mayor Garnes reported on her attendance at the Seismic Safety Commission meeting in Sacramento last Thursday and said that it was a 50th anniversary celebration at the State Capitol where they presented the commission with a resolution and said that she spoke about Rio Dell.

She said that she would be going to Ukiah on Thursday to attend a Great Redwood Trail board meeting, and then onto Sacramento for a Cal Cities Environmental Quality Committee meeting. She also reported that the Executive Director of Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) will be retiring in May and the Deputy Director would be assuming that role.

ADJOURNMENT

Carter/Orr made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 p.m. to the February 6, 2026, regular meeting. Motion carried 4-0.

Attest:

Debra Garnes, Mayor

Karen Dunham, City Clerk



*Rio Dell City Hall
675 Wildwood Avenue
Rio Dell, CA 95562
(707) 764-3532
riodellcity.com*

February 3, 2026

TO: Rio Dell City Council

FROM: Travis Sanborn, Finance Director

THROUGH: Kyle Knopp, City Manager

SUBJECT: Authorization for the City Manager to Appoint Finance Director Travis Sanborn as Acting City Manager During Periods of Temporary Absence or Disability Pursuant to Rio Dell Municipal Code 2.15.040(5)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL:

Authorize the City Manager to appoint Finance Director Travis Sanborn as Acting City Manager during periods of temporary absence or disability.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

From time to time the City Manager may be temporarily absent or unable to perform the duties of the office. Rio Dell Municipal Code section 2.15.040(5) calls for the Council's approval of the City Manager's appointment of any Acting City Manager. Approval of this item will allow the City Manager to designate Travis Sanborn as the Acting City Manager into the future.

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Community Development Department
675 Wildwood Avenue
Rio Dell, CA 95562
(707) 764-3532

For Meeting of: February 3, 2026

☒ Consent Item; ☐ Public Hearing Item

To: City Council

From: Kevin Caldwell, Community Development Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "K Caldwell", enclosed in a circular blue ink stamp.

Through: Kyle Knopp, City Manager

Date: January 22, 2026

Subject: 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report

Recommendation:

That the City Council:

1. Receive and file the 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report.

Discussion:

Every jurisdiction in the State is required to prepare an annual General Plan Progress Report. The report has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of Government Code Section 65400. Guidance for preparation of the report is provided by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

The purpose of the document is to report on the City of Rio Dell's progress in implementing its General Plan. The Report was presented to the Planning Commission at their meeting of January 27, 2026. After submitting the report to the City Council, the report will be submitted to OPR as required by State law.

Attachment 1: General Plan Annual Progress Report

City of Rio Dell General Plan Annual Progress Report Year 2025



**Prepared by the
Community Development Department**

January 22, 2026

City of Rio Dell

General Plan Annual Progress Report

Year 2025

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I. Introduction

This report has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of Government Code Section 65400. Guidance for the preparation of the report is provided by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

The purpose of the document is to report on the City of Rio Dell’s progress in implementing its General Plan. The document was provided to the City Council and Planning Commission for their review on February 3, 2026, and January 27, 2026, respectively, and will be submitted to OPR and the Department of Housing and Community Development following these reviews.

Background

The City adopted a comprehensive update to the General Plan in 2008. The Plan replaced, reformatted, and updated the previous General Plan in its entirety. As a result of many meetings, the General Plan was updated to include new land use designations and associated zoning text amendments.

The City’s Circulation, Open Space and Conservation Elements were updated in 2013. The Safety Element was updated and adopted in 2016 and amended in 2023 and 2025. The Housing Element was updated in November of 2020 and again in 2022.

All of the City’s General Plan Elements and Zoning Regulations can be found at the City’s website: <https://cityofriodell.ca.gov/>

Informational Document

This document is a reporting document and does not create or alter policy. The content is provided for informational purposes only and is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Guidelines Section 15306, Information Collection.

Organization

After the previous introductory section, a summary of projects and issues addressed in the last year is provided, and then each General Plan element is addressed. Following these topics, the City’s continuing efforts to address minor implementation issues, compliance activities, and changes in state law requiring updates to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance are addressed.

II. Plans, Projects, and Accomplishments

During 2025 the City processed numerous projects, including Building Permits, Use Permits, Lot Line Adjustments, Notice of Merger, text amendments to both the City’s Zoning Regulations and General Plan. The following summaries provide a brief overview of these projects and

programs, and are not intended to be exhaustive.

Building Permits

The Building Division of the Community Development Department issued 139 Building Permits in 2025. Total valuation of these projects was \$2,328,426.00. There was one (1) Building Permit issued for single-family manufactured home and one (1) Building Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). Thirty-six (36) permits were issued for new roofs and nine (9) permits for new solar systems. The City issued ninety-four (94) other permits for foundation repairs, interior improvements, electrical panel upgrades, HVAC systems, hot water heaters, and siding replacement among other things. The City received approximately \$41,500 in Building Permit Fees in 2025.

Planning Projects

The Planning Division processed a variety of planning projects during 2025, including Use Permits, Design Review, Notice of Mergers, General Plan and Zoning Amendments and updating the City's CDBG Guidelines. Of the projects heard by the Planning Commission, General Plan and Zoning Amendments are sent to the City Council with a recommendation of approval for the Council to consider the applications.

Projects Reviewed During 2025

The following projects were reviewed by the Planning Commission and/or the City Council in 2025.

1. PG&E's Rule 20A Undergrounding Program. The City held hearings regarding PG&E's Rule 20A Undergrounding Program. The Rule 20A undergrounding program offers a *ratepayer-funded pathway* for Rio Dell to convert overhead electrical distribution lines to underground service. The City had to amend the boundaries of Underground District No. 2 to meet the required public interest criteria. The City's engagement with PG&E on Rule 20A work will result in a dramatic aesthetic benefit to the community along Wildwood Avenue. PG&E, AT&T and Optimum are currently in the planning and engineering stages to underground the overhead utilities.

Result: The City Council approved the amended District boundaries at the meeting on March 4, 2025.

2. Heussler Fourplex Design Review. The Planning Commission considered a Design Review application for the construction of new 2-story 4-plex containing (4) 3-bedroom, 2-1/2 bathroom units, with attached 1-car garage and 1 additional off-street parking space. Each unit features its own separate covered entrance, a covered back porch, and a private covered balcony at the second floor.

Result: The Planning Commission approved the proposed project at their meeting on April 29, 2025.

3. Humboldt Seed Company Cannabis Dispensary Conditional Use Permit. Staff processed an application for a Conditional Use permit to establish a cannabis dispensary in an existing 1500+/- square foot building. The parcel is provided with community water and sewer.

Result: The Planning Commission approved the proposed project at their meeting on June 25, 2025.

4. Housing Text Amendments. Staff processed State mandated housing text amendments, including updating the City's Density Bonus Regulations, establishing Reasonable Accommodations Regulations, Single Room Occupancy Unit Regulations and amending the Town Center (TC) and Residential Multifamily (RM) designations to allow Single Room Occupancy Units.

Result: The Planning Commission approved the text amendments at their meeting on June 25, 2025 and the City Council approved and adopted Ordinance No. 415-2025 implementing the amendments at their meeting on July 15, 2025.

5. Industrial Commercial Text Amendments. In 2025, the City of Rio Dell undertook updates to its Industrial–Commercial (I-C) zoning regulations to better support economic development, business attraction, and land use flexibility. The text amendments modernize outdated provisions, clarify permitted and conditionally permitted uses, and remove regulatory barriers that have limited investment and adaptive reuse of existing properties.

The amendments are intended to encourage a broader range of commercial and light industrial activities, streamline the development review process, and ensure zoning regulations align with current market conditions and community goals. By improving clarity and flexibility within the I-C zone, the City aims to promote job creation, support local businesses, and strengthen Rio Dell's economic resilience while maintaining appropriate development standards.

Result: The Planning Commission approved the text amendments at their meeting on November 26, 2024 and the City Council approved and adopted Ordinance No. 411-2025 implementing the amendments at their meeting on March 4, 2025.

6. Fire Hazard Severity Maps.

In 2025, the City of Rio Dell adopted updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) maps as issued by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). The adoption ensures the City's local planning and development regulations align with current state fire hazard data and wildfire risk standards.

The updated maps identify areas of moderate and high fire hazard severity and provide a consistent framework for applying fire-safe building standards and land use requirements. Adoption of the FHSZ maps supports public safety, improves wildfire preparedness, and enhances community resilience while maintaining compliance with state law.

Result: The City Council approved and adopted Ordinance No. 413-2025 establishing Chapter 8.45 of the Rio Dell Municipal Code the at their meeting on April 15, 2025.

7. Margro Advisors Conditional Use Permit. Staff processed an application for a Conditional Use Permit to allow two Vacation Dwelling Units on the upper floor of an existing commercial building. The units were originally motel units and have been used as apartments for decades. The parcel is provided with community water sewer.

Result: The Planning Commission approved the proposed project at their meeting on June 25, 2025.

8. Accessory Dwelling Unit Amendments. Staff processed amendments to the City's Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Regulations to incorporate State mandated changes pursuant to SB 1211

Result: The Planning Commission approved the text amendments at their meeting on August 26, 2025 and the City Council approved and adopted Ordinance No. 418-2025 implementing the amendments at their meeting on September 16, 2025.

9. Safety Element Update Incorporating the 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Staff process an amendment to the Safety Element incorporating the 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). The Humboldt County Multi-Jurisdiction Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) 2025 serves as an update to the local agencies and districts ongoing efforts in hazard mitigation planning. The initial plan, developed in 2007, identified resources, information, and strategies to reduce risks from natural hazards and called for regular updates. The plan was last updated in 2020, and the 2025 LHMP fulfills this ongoing update requirement.

Result: The Planning Commission approved the amendment at their meeting on August 26, 2025 and the City Council approved and adopted Resolution No. 147-2025 amending the Safety Element to incorporate the 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan at their meeting on September 16, 2025.

10. Sign Regulations Amendments. Staff processed updates amending the City's Sign/Billboard regulations to (1) facilitate a third billboard on the east side of Highway 101 within the Humboldt Rio Dell Business Park (HRDBP); (2) establish a definition and use type for community-oriented billboards; and (3) rezone a portion of the City's wastewater disposal field in the west side of Highway 101 to facilitate a total of three billboards, including a community-oriented billboard for use by the Chamber of Commerce; and (4) establish a Qualified (Q)

Combining zone.

Result: The Planning Commission approved the amendments at their meeting on November 25, 2025 and the City Council held the first public hearing on December 2, 2025 and approved and adopted Ordinance No. 419-2025 at their meeting of January 6, 2026.

11. School Impact Fees. Staff presented a report regarding the Rio Dell School District's proposed School Impact Fees to the City Council on November 18, 2025.

Result: The City Council considered the proposed impact fees and took no action.

12. Application Submittal to the Wildlife Conservation Board for Phase II of the Eel River Trail. Staff prepared and the City Council authorized the submittal of an application to the WCB for Phase II of the Eel River Trail project in April 17, 2025. The Eel River Trail project includes a 1,600+/- foot Class I shared-use path (pedestrian, bicycle) with associated trailhead improvements. Phase II includes a concrete accessible switch-back style ramp structure to transition from Davis Street down to the lower trail grade. The ramp also includes stairs as part of the design of the ramp.

Result: The WCB approved the Grant application on August 28, 2025. The project went out to bid in early December 2025 and the bid was awarded to Hooven and Company on January 20, 2025.

13. 2024 Housing Element and General Plan Annual Progress Report: Every jurisdiction in the State is required to prepare a General Plan Annual Progress Report. The 2025 report was prepared pursuant to the requirements of Government Code Section 65400. Guidance for the preparation of the report is provided by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

Result: The Planning Commission and City Council received and discussed the report.

14. Façade Improvements Applications: The Façade Improvement Program (FIP) is a reimbursement grant program provided to a business and/or property owner for the improvement of existing commercial buildings throughout the City of Rio Dell. The program provides a matching grant of 50% of the façade improvement cost to the business and/or owner up to a maximum dollar amount \$15,000 per approved project.

The purpose of the FIP is to induce private investment that results in quality improvements and enhancements to business-use properties. It is the City's intention that the FIP serve public-private incentive for significant aesthetic improvements to the commercial area in which the property is located. **Funded projects must result in significant aesthetic improvements to the**

commercial area in which the property is located.

The following projects were reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission in 2025.

- Rio Dell Laundromat – New siding, windows, doors, signage and paint.
- Margro Advisor’s Building - New fencing between the applicant’s building and the building next door on the Wildwood Avenue side and some fencing on the Monument Drive side of the building. Solar light caps are proposed on the fence posts. In addition, solar lighting of the mural on the Monument side of the building is also proposed. Also proposed is decorative security screen doors, a planter with flowers and a bench.

Result: The applications were approved.

15. Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant: Staff prepared and submitted a grant application seeking Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) assistance to acquire, improve and modernize Davis Park, a key neighborhood park that provides vital recreational opportunities for residents of all ages. The Park is currently on lands owned by the Rio Dell School District. The project focuses on acquisition, enhanced maintenance, and expanding safe, inclusive outdoor recreation options for the community.

Result: The application is currently under review. It’s expected that the grants will be awarded next month.

16. Humboldt Catalyst Grant: The Humboldt Catalyst Grant supports high-impact projects that advance economic recovery, resilience, and long-term prosperity in Humboldt County. The program prioritizes collaborative efforts that create jobs, strengthen infrastructure, and deliver measurable benefits to rural and underserved communities.

The City of Rio Dell made application for a Humboldt Rising grant funding to support development of a regional meat processing facility at the Humboldt Rio Dell Business Park (HRDBP). The application was made because the regions only meat processing facility, Redwood Meats, closed in 2024. The facility would provide critical processing capacity for local livestock producers, reducing costs and travel distances while keeping agricultural value within the region. A similar application was awarded to another organization.

Staff is working with the group and hopefully the facility will be built at the Humboldt Rio Dell Business Park (HRDBP). If built, the project will create local jobs, support small and mid-scale ranchers, and improve regional food security by stabilizing local supply chains. Humboldt Rising funding will help advance site development and infrastructure necessary to establish a compliant, sustainable facility that delivers long-term economic and community benefits to Rio Dell and the surrounding region.

Result: The grant was awarded to another organization.

17. Community Development Block Grant: Staff prepared and submitted two grant applications to the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for funding to design and construct critical drainage improvements along Second Avenue and Pacific Avenue. These streets experience recurring flooding during storm events, which threatens public safety, damages public infrastructure, and impacts nearby homes and businesses—particularly those serving low- and moderate-income residents.

The proposed project will improve stormwater conveyance, reduce roadway flooding, and enhance overall street safety and accessibility. Upgrades will help protect adjacent properties, extend the useful life of public infrastructure, and improve emergency access during severe weather events. The project directly supports CDBG objectives by addressing infrastructure deficiencies in a rural community and providing clear public health and safety benefits.

CDBG funding will allow Rio Dell to address long-standing drainage issues, increase community resilience to flooding, and improve quality of life for residents while ensuring compliance with state and federal standards.

Result: The City was not awarded the grants.

18. CALFIRE Project: Staff continues to monitor the progress and work with DGS in exploring shared use of the Todd parcel as part of the proposed relocation of the CAL FIRE Humboldt–Del Norte Unit Headquarters. The City’s goal is to accommodate CAL FIRE’s operational needs while allowing for complementary uses that support broader community and economic development objectives.

CAL FIRE and the Department of General Services (DGS) held an Open House at the elementary school in April regarding the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The City submitted to DGS in May of 2025. Rio Dell’s comments highlighted the need for the EIR to evaluate land use compatibility, infrastructure and utility capacity, traffic and access, and potential effects on surrounding properties and future development opportunities. The City also noted the importance of considering shared-use opportunities on the site and ensuring that project design and mitigation measures align with local planning goals and public safety objectives.

Overall, the City’s comments were intended to support a thorough and transparent environmental review while helping to identify opportunities for a project that is operationally effective for CAL FIRE and compatible with the City’s long-term planning and community interests. The City developed a conceptual shared site plan.

The City has had numerous discussions with DGS and CAL FIRE emphasizing coordination on site planning, access, and long-term compatibility to ensure the parcel can serve multiple public purposes. The City will continue working with DGS and CAL FIRE to evaluate feasibility and identify opportunities for a mutually beneficial shared-use arrangement.

Other Plans and Projects

The following discussion summarizes other projects that involved efforts from the Community Development Department, Planning Division staff in 2025.

● Climate Action Plan Update

The City has been collaborating with the County of Humboldt, the City of Eureka, the City of Arcata, the City of Blue Lake, the City of Trinidad, the City of Ferndale, the City of Fortuna to craft a regional approach for addressing the challenges of climate change through the development of a Regional Climate Action Plan (CAP).

This regional approach enables improved coordination and maximizes the effectiveness of Green House Gas (GHG) reduction measures. Throughout the development process of the draft CAP, all jurisdictions have been included in the conversations around decision-making.

The Humboldt Regional Climate Action Plan and associated Environmental Impact Report was approved in December 2025. The agencies are continuing to work together in implementing the Plan, including establishing a regional Program Manager to coordinate the regional implementation of the plan.

● Nuisance Committee

The Community Development staff provides support to the City's Nuisance Committee which meets monthly. The Nuisance Committee provides oversight and advice to the Code Compliance Manager and the Police Chief on priorities and courses of action.

● Traffic Committee

The Community Development staff provides support to the City's Traffic Committee which meets on an "as-needed basis". The Traffic Committee provides oversight and advice to the City Council, City Manager and the Police Chief on priorities and courses of action, including text amendments to the City's traffic regulations. The committee met numerous times to discuss commercial truck parking regulations. As a result, the parking regulations were amended based on public comments and direction from the City Council.

● CDBG Loan Committee

The Community Development Director along with the City Manager and Finance Director make up the City's CDBG Loan Committee. Committee members consider applications for low- to moderate-income family's homebuyer and rehabilitation loans under CDBG grant programs. A number of loans were processed and made for repairs for earthquake damage in 2025.

The Community Development Department provided support in administering capital projects, including the Painter Street sewer line upsizing, the water tank replacement projects and the construction of the small dog area at the City’s Dog Park. Staff also processed, reviewed, approved and/or participated in the following projects and activities:

- Roscoe Subdivision Improvement Plans
- Participate in UC Berkeley’s Transferable Development Rights (TDR’s) program
- Provide update/summary to Humboldt OES regarding earthquake repairs/permits
- Updated ADU, Electrical Handouts
- Attend CALBO, NEC and Energy Code Webinars
- Meeting with Retail Strategies to discuss Economic Development
- Facilitate W-Trans Traffic Impact Study – Avenues Neighborhood
- Participated in HCAOG Housing Element Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) methodology meetings to discuss potential options regarding Housing-Jobs alternatives.
- Request proposals from PLACEWORKS and PLANWEST for the 7th Cycle Housing Element
- Facilitate enrollment in the California Uniform Public Construction Cost Accounting Act (CUPCCAA)
- Respond to HCD’s inquiry Housing Element implementation programs (mixed-uses and housing by right in all residential zones)
- Complete and submit Humboldt Area Foundation (HAF) grant application for new LED sign
- Review and submit comments HCAOG’s Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

III. General Plan Elements

California state law requires that every city adopt a General Plan to guide the physical development of both public and private lands within the city limits. The role of a community's general plan is to act as a "constitution;" a basis for rational decisions regarding a city's long-term physical development.

The General Plan details the City’s goals and guiding principles for a variety of planning topics and is the constitution for future development. California Government Code Section 65300 et seq. provides direction and specifications for the content of the General Plan. The following seven elements are required:

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Conservation
- Open Space
- Noise
- Safety
- Housing

The elements may be combined or renamed, but basic requirements must be included. An agency may adopt any type of optional element, such as an Economic Element, at its discretion. Only the Housing Element must be certified by another agency (i.e., HCD).

The General Plan is a snap shot of a certain period in time and is both an expression of Rio Dell's community values and a legal document. The General Plan must be comprehensive, long term, and internally consistent. All of the City's other land use regulations, including zoning, subdivisions, specific plans, and redevelopment plans must conform to the General Plan. The General Plan is a bridge between these physical regulations and Rio Dell's community values, visions, and goals.

Land Use Element

The City of Rio Dell is required to periodically update their General Plan. The City adopted the current Land Use element in 2008. The prior Land Use Element was revised in 1980.

There have been a number of amendments since the adoption of the current Land Use Element. The most significant amendment occurred in 2012 when the City redesignated approximately 37 acres in the "Avenues" neighborhood from Town Center to Urban Residential. The area was redesignated after residents complained about the ability to insure residences which were considered legal non-conforming uses.

In 2022, staff discovered that residential densities were not included in the Neighborhood Center and Community Commercial designations. In addition, the Town Center designation specified a density range of 10 – 22 units per net acre. The City approved Resolution No. 1542-2022 specifying a density of up to 20 units per net acre for all three commercial designations and amending the City's Residential Multifamily and commercial land use designations to include State mandated Supportive and Transitional Housing projects and Low Barrier Navigation Centers.

Circulation Element

The Circulation Element was adopted in 2013. The previous Circulation Element was adopted in 1977.

The Circulation Element identifies the guiding principles for moving people and goods within the City and identifies the infrastructure necessary to assure that the transportation network will serve the City at General Plan build-out.

A majority of trips are made by automobile. The Circulation Element identifies the roadway system necessary for automobile traffic by setting levels of service, hierarchy of roads, and areas where road improvements are necessary.

The Circulation Element also identifies alternative travel modes, such as walking, bicycles, bus transit, and rail transit. The alternative transportation is important to reduce pressure on

roads, conserve energy, and improve the public health through exercise.

The road system provides many functions in addition to carrying vehicle traffic. It provides open space separating dwelling units and commercial uses. If properly landscaped, street side landscaping provides location for trees to support the urban forest. If developed with safe pedestrian and bike ways, it serves as a non-motorized transportation corridor, a linear park, and an attractive network for healthy exercise. If properly designed, it provides the background for the community urban design and appearance. Finally, it provides the right of way for most of the City's public utilities infrastructure.

Conservation and Open Space Element

The previous Conservation Element was adopted in 2001 and the previous Open Space Element was adopted in 1972. The current Open Space and Conservation Element was adopted in 2013.

The Open Space and Conservation Element is concerned with the conservation of natural resources and the provision of open space within community. Open Space and Conservation are combined because the natural resources and open space provide the framework for the built areas of the City, and the overall appearance of the City integrates natural and man-made elements.

The primary vision of the Open Space and Conservation element is to maintain and encourage development that compliments the natural visual setting of Rio Dell. The City is located in a portion of the County with high quality aesthetic value due to its many natural and community resources. The bluffs on the east side of the City provide outstanding aesthetic value. In addition, Rio Dell is at a transition point where the Eel River Valley's redwood covered slopes open up to the broad Eel River delta. Sweeping vistas associated with the Eel River valley contribute to the City aesthetic setting.

The Conservation Element guides the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources (water, forests, soils, rivers, mineral deposits, and others), while the Open Space Element guides the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of open-space lands, including parks. Together, these elements present a framework of goals and policies for use and protection of all the natural resource and open space assets of the City.

Conservation goals include development, and utilization of natural resources such as water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and cultural resources. Open space goals include limiting hillside development, creek and river setback areas, biologically sensitive habitat, and natural forests.

The Open Space and Conservation elements addresses the conservation of open space lands, including issues related to working lands and park lands, the orderly development of residential land, and coordination with other agency programs related to conserving open space lands.

State planning law provides a detailed description of open space lands and the topics that must be addressed in the Open Space and Conservation Elements. These topics include Open Space for the Preservation of Natural Resources, Open Space for the Managed Production of Resources, Open Space for Outdoor Recreation and Open Space for Public Health and Safety:

State law (Government Code 65560 et seq.) requires a local open-space plan (element) for the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of open-space land within its jurisdiction, and that the open space plan contain an action program that identifies how the plan or element is to be implemented.

The City continues to consult with tribal intergovernmental representatives to conserve and protect cultural and historical resources. Cooperation with the two incorporated cities, special districts, and State and Federal agencies continues to preserve the County's cultural heritage, historical and archaeological structures, sites, and landmarks.

Noise Element

The Noise Element is one of the City's older General Plan Elements. It was approved and adopted in August of 2001. Although noise standards have not dramatically changed since 2001, City staff hopes to update the Noise Element in 2024.

Government Code Section 65302(f) requires each California city and county to include within its general plan a noise element that analyzes and quantifies noise levels and the extent of noise exposure in their jurisdictions from the following sources:

- Highways and freeways;
- Primary arterial and major local streets;
- Passenger and freight online railroad operations and ground rapid transit systems;
- Commercial, general aviation, heliport, helistop, and military airport operations, aircraft overflights, jet engine test stands, and all other ground facilities and maintenance functions related to airport operation;
- Local industrial plants, including, but not limited to, railroad classification yards; and
- Other ground stationary noise sources identified by local agencies as contributing to the community noise environment.

The Noise Element is required to map noise level contours such that it may be used as a basis for land use decisions. It must include implementation measures and possible solutions to existing and foreseeable noise problems. Furthermore, the policies and standards of the Noise Element must be sufficient to serve as a guideline for compliance with sound transmission

control requirements.

The Noise Element aims to protect the City's residents and visitors from the harmful and annoying effects of exposure to excessive noise. The primary source of noise within the City is Highway 101.

Safety Element

The Safety Element was updated and adopted in 2016. The purpose of the safety element is to reduce the potential risk of death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from fires, floods, earthquakes, landslides, and other hazards. The safety element overlaps topics also mandated in the land use, conservation, and open-space elements. The components of this Element include:

- Geologic/Seismic Hazards
- Flood Hazards
- Fire Hazards
- Airport Safety
- Industrial Hazards
- Hazardous Materials
- Emergency Management

The safety element must identify hazards and hazard abatement provisions to guide local decisions related to zoning, subdivisions, and entitlement permits. The element contains general hazard and risk reduction strategies and policies supporting hazard mitigation measures. Policies address the identification of hazards and emergency response, as well as mitigation through avoidance of hazards by new projects and reduction of risk in developed areas. Land development is subject to a number of hazards to life and property, including seismic and non-seismic land instability, flooding, fire, and dangers from airport operations.

The degree of risk associated with these hazards can only be measured in relative terms. What constitutes 'acceptable risk' varies with the type of development involved. For instance, a hospital should meet very strict earthquake standards in order to ensure that it is able to function in the event of a serious earthquake. A warehouse, on the other hand, would not need to be designed to the same rigorous standards because its functions during an earthquake would not be critical to the community's response to the emergency, nor would it pose serious risk to large numbers of people should it fail.

The General Plan manages risk through the use of land use designations to limit exposure to hazardous areas and through policies tailored to specific hazardous conditions. The goals, policies and implementation measures of this Element are many of the same existing policies found in Chapter 5, the Open Space and Conservation Element. All of the goals, policies and implementation measures are designed to proactively improve overall safety conditions within

the City.

As mentioned previously, the City Safety Element was updated in 2023 to include a brief discussion on the December 20, 2022 and January 1, 2023 earthquakes and to incorporate the County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) by reference and to include the Rio Dell element of the LHMP in the Safety Element. The Safety Element was again amended to incorporate the 2025 LHMP in September of 2025.

Housing Element

The Housing Element identifies existing and projected housing needs and establishes goals, policies, standards, and implementation measures for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing in the City of Rio Dell (City). It meets detailed requirements of state Housing Element law, including requirements for a residential land inventory sufficient to meet the City's share of the state-prescribed regional housing need. The Housing Element is the component of the City's General Plan that provides an eight-year vision for housing.

The California housing element law, enacted in 1969, mandates that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. The law acknowledges that, in order for the private market to adequately address housing needs and demand, local governments must adopt land use plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development. This document presents an effective housing element that discusses the necessary conditions for preserving and producing an adequate supply of affordable housing. Among other things, the housing element provides an inventory of land adequately zoned or planned to be zoned for housing, certainty in permit processing procedures, and a commitment to assist in housing development through regulatory concessions and incentives.

The California state legislature has identified the attainment of a decent home and suitable living environment for every resident as the state's major housing goal. Recognizing the important role of local planning programs in pursuing this goal, the legislature has mandated that all cities and counties prepare a housing element as part of their comprehensive general plan. Section 65302(c) of the Government Code sets forth the specific components to be contained in a community's housing element.

The primary purpose of a housing element is to:

- Preserve and improve housing and neighborhoods,
- Provide adequate housing sites,
- Assist in the provision of affordable housing,
- Remove governmental constraints to housing investment, and
- Promote fair and equal housing opportunities.

This Housing Element consists of the following sections:

1. Housing Goals, Policies, and Programs
2. Review of the Previous Housing Element Programs
3. Housing Needs Assessment
4. Housing Resources
5. Housing Constraints
6. Quantified Objectives

California law requires that each city and county, when preparing its state-mandated housing element, develop local housing programs to meet its “fair share” of existing and future housing needs for all income groups. This fair-share concept seeks to ensure that each jurisdiction provides housing for its residents with a variety appropriate to their needs. The fair share is allocated to each city and the county by HCD. One of the major goals of the housing element is to develop policies and programs to meet the goals established through the fair-share allocation.

State law requires local governments to provide adequate sites for the construction of housing to meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) plan. The County, Cities and the Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) have been working on the RHNA methodology since September of 2025 for the **7th RHNA cycle**, which covers **2028–2037** (the allocation process HCAOG is undertaking based on the state’s housing need determination).

In December of 2025 the HCAOG Board of Directors approved the following methodiolgy for the 7th cycle.

- Allocates housing using a **50/50 weighting of population and jobs**.
- Applies a **20% income-category adjustment** to better balance allocations across income levels.

Under HCAOG’s approved methodology the City of Rio Dell is obligated to identify sites for 95 housing units. Below is a table of the adopted allocations for the County and seven cities, including Rio Dell.

Summary - 50/50 Jobs/Population - Low Income RHNA per VMT and Opportunity									
Jurisdiction	Acutley Low (0% - 15% MHI)	Extremely Low (15% - 30% MHI)	Very Low (30% - 50% MHI)	Low (50% - 80% MHI)	Moderate (80% - 120% MHI)	Above Moderate (120%<MHI)	Total Jurisdictional Allocation	Total Low Income RHNA	Total High Income RHNA
Arcata	103	180	117	206	89	367	1,042	586	456
Blue Lake	3	7	4	8	4	15	41	22	19
Eureka	179	267	193	328	154	619	1,740	967	773
Femdale	6	9	7	11	5	19	57	33	24
Fortuna	50	75	53	93	44	164	479	271	208
Rio Dell	7	11	6	16	10	45	95	40	55
Trinidad	3	4	3	5	6	6	27	15	12
Unincorporated County	211	333	244	397	253	1,043	2,481	1,185	1,296
Total Regional Allocation	562	866	627	1,064	565	2,278	5,962	3,119	2,843

The City of Eureka decided to appeal HCAOG’s RHNA methodology for the 7th cycle (2028–2037) primarily because of how the adopted allocation formula affected Eureka’s distribution of housing needs by income category and what city officials see as reinforcing a concentration of lower-income housing in Eureka.

The City continues to work with service providers to provide for the needs of lower- income households, the disabled, and other special needs populations, per the direction provided in the Housing Element.

IV. General Plan and Zoning Code Updates

In 2025 City staff continued to identify and address minor implementation issues based on specific projects, compliance activities, and changes in state law that affect these land use documents. Amendments to the Zoning Code were completed addressing these issues. This update approach will be repeated on an as-needed basis.

V. Conclusion

The General Plan is the City's constitution, development blue-print and guiding vision. Upkeep and maintenance of the General Plan is a continuous process. The City implements the General Plan's vision on a day-to-day basis in its many planning projects, and strives to include the public in the decision-making process.

The City conducted many planning activities in 2025, as identified in this report, and continued its project review responsibilities to further the General Plan's goals, policies, programs, and implementation measures. Updates to the remainder of the General Plan and the zoning ordinance are expected to continue to move forward in 2026.



Staff Highlights – 2026-01-03

City Council

City Manager

City Clerk

Four (4) Building Permit Applications:

178 Grayland Heights Dr. – Manufactured Home (ADU)
993 Curtis Lane – Manufactured Home (ADU)
103 Birch St. – Replacement of 3 Inefficient Windows
456 Third Ave. – Replacement of 1 Broken Window

Processed One (1) Business License Application:

Hot Grillz – Mobile Food Service/Catering

Processed Three (3) Encroachment Permit Applications:

PG&E – Overhead Maintenance on Utility Pole – 341 Pacific Ave.
Friesen Design Build – Transporting Manufactured Home to Curtis Lane/Equipment on Site Friesen
Design Build - Transporting Manufactured Home to Grayland Hgts./Equipment on Site

Misc:

Submitted Employment Data Report to Department of Labor for January 2026

Posted Notice of Vacancies on Rio Dell Planning Commission

City Attorney

Human Resources, Risk & Training

Finance Department

- Rio Dell Drinking Water Infrastructure Improvement Project
 - Approved and processed Progress Payment No. 9
 - Completed and submitted Invoice #15
 - Requested Draw #9 from RCAC



- Provided fiscal and compliance support for external audits by coordinating payroll, liability, journal, and cash receipt samples with fiscal staff
- Worked with GHD (contract engineers) to establish billable rates for City staff for upcoming projects
- Provided GHD fiscal information for the Fiscal Sustainability Plan update related to the Painter Street Upsizing Project
- Met with Caltrans Local Assistance representatives to advance pending road construction projects
- Completed time extension requests for active Caltrans projects
- Submitted Progress Report #4 for the City's CalRecycle SB 1383 grant
- Updated the City's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) to maintain federal funding eligibility
- Created DIR number for contractor performing work on the Eel River Trail Accessible Ramp Project
- Worked with cannabis business partners to collect and ensure proper completion of required tax forms
- Listed surplus City assets on GovDeals for disposal via public auction
- Completed the City of Rio Dell's Possessory Interest Annual Report and submitted it for review and processing to the Humboldt County Assessor's Office

Public Works Water

Water System monthly / weekly Bacteria and Quanti Tray testing

Electrical troubleshooting on Water Treatment Facility (ONGOING)

Freshwater Environmental assist on Water System Backflow Device Program

Water leak on Upper Monument Rd

Water leak at 555 Painter St

Monthly maintenance and calibration of Water treatment plant pH equipment

Equipment maintenance at Metro Wells



Earthquake eval of Well #1. Watson Wells - Replace Well 1 piping.

Coordinate with GHD on Earthquake damaged water infrastructure

Water CIP construction meetings and progress updates

Water Line Project assistance on shutdowns and flushing main lines

Cleanup areas throughout town due to construction

Backup generator servicing

Public Works Wastewater

Public Works Streets, Buildings and Grounds

Mark out utilities for USA's (Underground Service Alerts)

worked on safety training for Monday safety meeting on "Tactical Communication skill when dealing with the public"

Roadside mowing around town

Mow and Weedeat Gateway North and South, City Hall, Memorial and Blue Star parks.

Eel River Trail garbage pickup and cleaning

Clear drains throughout town

Installation of Speed Radar Signs at 5 locations throughout town.

Backup generator servicing

Unpack and verify packing list of items for the dog park

Patch potholes throughout town

Public Works City Engineer

Public Works Capital Projects

Police Department

Patrol Statistics:

During Jan. 20th – Feb. 3rd 2026, the Rio Dell Police Department handled 168 incidents. This includes 87 calls for service, and 81 Officer Initiated Contacts. 3 arrests were made. A total of 0 citations were issued



for traffic offenses or other miscellaneous criminal violations. 8 total cases requiring investigation were taken.

Staffing:

The Police Department is currently down one (1) sworn officer positions.

- One Police Officer Applicant in backgrounds.

Community Events / Notable Cases:

- Attended Rio Dell First 5 Playgroup at the Rio Dell Fire Hall.
- On 1/24/26 Seth Bennett was arrested for Assault w/deadly weapon (Knife), False Imprisonment, and Dissuading a Witness following a roommate dispute on Ogle Ave. No significant injuries and Bennett was booked into Jail.
- Public Education efforts undertaken with a focus on the Avenues to encourage proper parking as the city moves closer to Universal Collection. Fliers with parking information are being left on vehicles in the area over the next couple weeks prior to citations for illegal parking being issues. Social Media post will be coming soon regarding same.

Abatement Projects:

Residential Abatement:

- Total Active Cases 28
- 2 closed case
- Progressing towards an abatement for 185 Douglas Street, 1580 Eeloa Avenue and 483 4th Avenue

Vehicular Abatement:

- 11 Total Active Cases
- 3 vehicles towed

Animal Control:

- 15 Calls for animal related issues
- 3 cats transported to Miranda's

Community Development Department

Final Inspections 123 Belleview Ave

Prepare Public Notice for January 27, 2026 PC Meeting

Prepare Annual General Plan Progress Report for PC and Council

Mohorovich Footings/foundation inspection (1/27/2026)

Prepare Façade Improvement Staff Reports

Update RHIP Registration list



PV and ESS inspection 1096 Riverside Drive

Reach out to AP Property Management, Six Rivers and RENTOR to schedule inspections

Review Building Permit application for ADU on Curtis Lane, requests additional information

Attend FEMA Flood requirements webinar

Respond to Element 7 sign and new name inquiry

Research bollard vendors/options

Create MWELO handout, complete and submit Annual Model Water Efficiency Ordinance Report

Discuss new billboard regulations w/Northpoint Engineering, send copy of regulations and application

Respond to inquiry from PLACEWORKS regarding Housing Element proposal

Attend PC meeting, present annual General Plan Progress Report, 3 FIP projects, prepare action letters to applicants

Final inspection bolt and brace project 616 Rigby Ave

Review City of Eureka RCAP staff report, prepare draft

Follow-up on Noel Electrical permit – Bluff Ave

Follow-up on Norton Permit 355 Douglas Ave

Follow-up on 186 Birch – Rental Housing Inspection – Approve

Work w/Six Rivers on schedule RHIP inspections

Review RCEA staff report on Climate Plan Program Coordinator

Complete and submit updated Budget narratives

Discussion w/Allpoints signs regarding amended Ordinance, existing signs at HRDBP

Intergovernmental

Humboldt-Rio Dell Business Park

*Rio Dell City Hall
675 Wildwood Avenue
Rio Dell, CA 95562
(707) 764-3532
cityofriodell.ca.gov*



February 3, 2026

TO: Rio Dell City Council

FROM: Kyle Knopp, City Manager

SUBJECT: Discussion and Possible Action Authorizing the City Manager to Award Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement Project to Mercer Fraser Company for \$1,570,283.50, Further to Authorize the City Manager to Enter into a Construction Agreement with Mercer Fraser Company for \$1,570,283.50 in Coordination with the City Attorney.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL:

Authorize the City Manager to:

- (1) Award the Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement Project to Mercer Fraser Company for \$1,570,283.50; and,
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to enter into a construction agreement with Mercer Fraser Company for \$1,570,283.50 in coordination with the City Attorney.

Take no action.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

On May 27, 2025 the Rio Dell City Council approved Resolution No. 1633-2025 to enter into a funding agreement with the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to receive \$1,490,550 in grant funding for the Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement Project.

At the conclusion of the bidding process Mercer Fraser was determined to be the low bidder for the project at \$1,570,283.50 leaving a gap in funding of \$79,733.50 plus contingencies funding. This figure is very close to target and is received as favorable. Staff is working with the State Water Resources Control Board to bridge this gap in funding and has been told such funding was likely. The City expects this gap in funding to be covered by the SWRCB upon Final Budget Approval (FBA) through the state.

This project is a high priority.

The City of Rio Dell's wastewater collection system contains a critical component known as the "Painter Street Line" that is severely undersized and impaired. This deficiency results in regular sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) during storm events at the end of Painter Street, creating public health and environmental concerns that the City is obligated to address.

During the rainy season, the City periodically experiences these SSOs due to excessive inflow and infiltration (I&I) entering the collection system during rain events. A significant portion of this I&I consists of groundwater that infiltrates the aging sewer infrastructure. Testing conducted by the City comparing the SSO outflow to upstream river water has demonstrated that the river water actually contains higher contaminant levels than the SSO discharge, due to the sheer volume of diluting groundwater entering the system. However, despite this data, any flow that leaves the sanitary sewer collection system is classified by the State as raw sewage and subject to regulatory enforcement.

The Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement Project involves upsizing the final pipe connection into the wastewater treatment plant to eliminate recurring sanitary sewer overflows during storm events. The project addresses the root cause of SSOs by increasing the capacity of the collection system to handle the excessive inflow and infiltration that occurs during rain events.

Attachment:

Memorandum from City Engineer, GHD.

///

Memorandum

January 27, 2026

To	City of Rio Dell		
Copy to	Rebecca Crow, Eli Stockwell		
From	Steven Pearl	Tel	+1 707 267-2212
Subject	City of Rio Dell Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement Project	Project no.	12640567

1. Bid Summary

As you are aware, GHD opened bids electronically on January 7, 2026 at 2 p.m. for construction of the City of Rio Dell Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement Project, which is being funded by a Clean Water Construction Grant through the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). Table 1 below lists the three bids that were received.

Table 1: Summary of bid results

Bidder	Total Bid
Mercer Fraser Company	\$1,570,283.50
GR Sundberg Inc.	\$1,932,378.00
Wahlund Construction	\$1,756,221.00

The Total Bid, which is the sum of the Base Bid plus Additive Bid, listed above was the basis for determining the lowest bid as stated in the bid forms. Mercer Fraser Company is the apparent low bidder based on the bids received. As stated in the Bidding Requirements, the basis for contract award is the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder. "Responsive" refers to the "bid" while "responsible" refers to the "bidder".

In considering whether a bid is "responsive", GHD evaluated whether the bid appropriately met the relevant requirements of the bidding documents including submission of appropriate forms. GHD confirmed that all requested bid forms provided by Mercer Fraser Company were complete. If there were any irregularities in the bid, GHD would determine as to whether the irregularity in the bid gives the bidder a material advantage or benefit not enjoyed by other bidders. Upon review of Mercer Fraser Company's bid, GHD found that they appear to be responsive in their bid and that there were no irregularities resulting in a material advantage.

Regarding whether a bidder is "responsible", GHD checked the Department of Consumer Affairs Contractors State License Board and determined Mercer Fraser Company has the appropriate active license as well the subcontractors listed in the bid. In addition, GHD checked the State Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) Division of Labor Standards Enforcement website and determined Mercer Fraser Company and the subcontractors listed in the bid have active DIR

registrations. Lastly, GHD verified with SAM.gov that Mercer Fraser Company is not currently debarred from public bidding. Based on this information, Mercer Fraser Company appears to be responsible.

2. Bid Analysis and Recommendation for Award

The project is grant funded through the SWRCB CWSRF with a current available budget of \$1,490,550.00 per the executed construction agreement with the SWRCB (Agreement No. D2404000). A Final Budget Approval Request will be submitted to request an increase of the total grant budget and subsequently amend the current construction agreement. The amended budget amount will include Mercer Fraser Company's total bid amount, design costs that have already been reimbursed, 20% change order contingency, as well as GHD's costs for construction management and administration.

Based on the bid results, GHD recommends the City award the Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement Project to Mercer Fraser Company with a Total Bid amount of \$1,570,283.50.

Following City Council approval to award the project, GHD will issue the Notice of Award to Mercer Fraser Company, which is included as Attachment 2. Mercer Fraser Company will then provide bonds and insurance, and upon review, GHD will prepare the contract forms and the Notice to Proceed for City execution.

Please feel free to contact GHD with any questions.

Regards



Steven Pearl
Project Manager

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Bid Tabulation
- Attachment 2 – Notice of Award

Attachment 1

Bid Tabulation and Bid Award Tabulation

Rio Dell Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement Project



Item	Description	Unit	Qty	Mercer-Fraser Co Total Cost
1	Mobilization/Demobilization	LS	1	\$ 157,000.00
2	Project Safety Including Underground Safety	LS	1	\$ 20,000.00
3	Traffic Control	LS	1	\$ 10,000.00
4	Utility Locating and Potholing	LS	1	\$ 20,000.00
5	Temporary Sewer Bypass	LS	1	\$ 40,000.00
6	Dewatering	LS	1	\$ 8,900.00
7	Remove and Dispose of Existing 12-inch Sewer Main (Assumed Asbestos Cement Pipe)	LF	2,290	\$ 57,250.00
8	Remove and Dispose of Existing Manholes	EA	5	\$ 12,500.00
9	Abandon-in-Place Existing 12-inch Sewer Main	LF	211	\$ 3,903.50
10	Abandon-in-Place Existing Manhole	EA	2	\$ 7,500.00
11	Protect-in-Place Greenhouse; Relocate Temporary Carport Structure; Support House Utilities As Needed at APN 053-011-024	LS	1	\$ 6,000.00
12	Clearing, Grubbing and Tree Removal	LS	1	\$ 6,000.00
13	Construct 12-inch SDR35 PVC Sewer Main	LF	45	\$ 6,300.00
14	Construct 18-inch SDR35 PVC Sewer Main – MH4 to MH6	LF	227	\$ 124,850.00
15	Construct Dual 15-inch SDR35 PVC Sewer Mains – MH1 to MH2	LF	776	\$ 155,200.00
16	Construct Dual 15-inch SDR35 PVC Sewer Mains – MH2 to MH3	LF	655	\$ 262,000.00
17	Construct Dual 15-inch SDR35 PVC Sewer Mains – MH3 to MH4	LF	730	\$ 146,000.00
18	Construct Painter Street Concrete Junction Structure (MH1)	EA	1	\$ 80,000.00
19	Construct 84-inch I.D. Standard Manhole (MH2, MH3, MH4)	EA	3	\$ 105,000.00
20	Construct 60-inch I.D. Standard Manhole (MH5 & MH6)	EA	2	\$ 60,000.00
21	Connect Existing Sewer Main, Painter St, Davis St & at VWWTP	EA	7	\$ 42,000.00
22	Reconnect Sewer Lateral to New Sewer, 4"-6"	EA	13	\$ 65,000.00
23	Connect to Existing Headworks	LS	1	\$ 10,000.00
24	Post-Construction Internal CCTV of Sewer Mains	LF	4,542	\$ 18,168.00
25	Civil Improvements	LS	1	\$ 55,000.00
26	Remove and Replace Existing Fencing at PL's 5 Locations	LS	1	\$ 3,500.00
27	Construct Chain-Linked Fence and Gate at MH4	LS	1	\$ 7,922.00
28	Water Line Relocation near STA 10+42	LS	1	\$ 2,800.00
BASE BID				\$ 1,492,793.50
A1	Asphalt Paving on Walnut Dr	TON	270	\$ 77,490.00
ADDITIVE BID				\$ 77,490.00
TOTAL BID				\$ 1,570,283.50

Attachment 2

Notice of Award

NOTICE OF AWARD

TO: Mercer-Fraser Company
PO Box 1006
Eureka, CA 95502

PROJECT: City of Rio Dell Painter Street Sewer Line Replacement

The OWNER has considered the BID submitted by you for the above described WORK in response to its Advertisement for BIDS dated January 7, 2026 and Information for BIDDERS.

You are hereby notified that your BID has been accepted for items in the amount of

One Million Five Hundred Seventy Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Three and one half Dollars (\$
\$1,570,283.50)

You are required by the Information for BIDDERS to execute the Agreement and furnish the required Contractor's certificates of insurance within ten (10) calendar days from the date this Notice is received by you.

If you fail to execute said Agreement and to furnish said INSURANCE within ten (10) calendar days from the date of receipt of this Notice, said OWNER will be entitled to consider all your rights arising out of the OWNER'S acceptance of your BID as abandoned and as a forfeiture of your BID BOND. The OWNER will be entitled to such other rights as may be granted by law.

You are required to return an acknowledged copy of this NOTICE OF AWARD to the OWNER.

Dated this 19 day of January, 2026

Owner: City of Rio Dell

By: _____ Title: City Manager

ACCEPTANCE OF NOTICE

Receipt of the above NOTICE OF AWARD is hereby acknowledged by:

(Name of Contractor)

Dated this _____ day of _____, 20____

By: _____ Title: _____



*Rio Dell City Hall
675 Wildwood Avenue
Rio Dell, CA 95562
(707) 764-3532
cityofriodell.ca.gov*

February 3, 2026

TO: Rio Dell City Council

FROM: Kyle Knopp, City Manager

SUBJECT: Approve Resolution No. 1662-2026 Updating the Wastewater Strength Classification System

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL:

Approve Resolution No. 1662-2026 updating the wastewater strength classification system; or,

Take no action.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Staff recommends approval of Resolution No. 1662-2026 to update the City's wastewater strength classification system by reclassifying certain coffee shop facilities from "Medium Strength" to "Domestic Strength" and clarifying the nomenclature for this category.

In May 2014, the City adopted a wastewater rate structure based on a study conducted by Bartle Wells Associates (BWA). This system established sewer strength classifications based on BWA's rate study experience, industry standard practices, and the State Water Resources Control Board's Revenue Program Guidelines. The classification system has been in continuous use since adoption.

The current classification under review applies to coffee shop facilities that meet the following criteria:

- No dishwasher on premises
- No garbage disposal on premises
- No food preparation on site
- No grease trap installed

Recent Classification History:

- Pre-July 2024: Classified as Domestic Strength
- July 2024: Staff review resulted in reclassification to High Strength (incorrect)
- November 2024: Corrected to Medium Strength per Resolution 1536-2022; customer received credit for July-November 2024 overcharges
- December 2024-Present: Currently classified as Medium Strength

Staff recently consulted with Alison Lechowicz of LT Municipal Consultants, the City's rate consultant and former BWA employee. Based on updated professional guidance, coffee shops meeting the criteria listed above should be classified as Domestic Strength rather than Medium Strength.

Resolution No. 1662-2026 will:

1. Update the wastewater strength classification system to reclassify qualifying coffee shops to "Domestic Strength"
2. Clarify the nomenclature to specify that "Coffee Shops – W/O Dish Washer & Garbage Disposal" includes facilities with no food preparation
3. Authorize a refunding of the difference in classifications to July 1, 2025. This is recommended as the consultants guidance is new and the prior fiscal year FY 24-25 is closed and audited.

The reclassification will result in reduced wastewater fees for affected facilities, reflecting the lower strength category. The impact is limited to the specific subset of coffee shop operations meeting the qualifying criteria. This impact is not expected to be significant.

The City is scheduled to conduct its next 5-year wastewater rate study within the next 18 months. During this process, staff will direct the consultant to:

- Comprehensively review the classification system
- Provide recommendations for meeting current industry standards
- Enhance clarity for staff implementation

Attachments:

Resolution No. 1662-2026
'Track Changes' sheet for Exhibit A

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RESOLUTION NO. 1662-2026
A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RIO DELL AMENDING EXHIBIT A OF
RESOLUTION NO. 1536-2022 RELATED TO FEES AND CHARGES FOR WASTEWATER
CUSTOMERS PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 13.10 OF THE RIO DELL MUNICIPAL CODE

WHEREAS, the City of Rio Dell is authorized by the California Constitution and the California Government Code to charge fees to cover expenses for the services it provides; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Rio Dell did adopt Ordinance No. 207, codified in Chapter 13.10 of the Rio Dell Municipal Code, that allows for sewer rates and charges to be modified by resolution of the City Council to provide for future changes; and,

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 207 deemed reasonable and authorizes the Council for the City of Rio Dell to fix charges to pay for expenses to be incurred by the wastewater department. The expenses to be paid include: (a) salaries, office expenses and other necessary disbursements; (b) the operation expenses of the utility; (c) provisions for the appropriate funds for repairs, replacements or betterments "; and,

WHEREAS, all wastewater system connections, once purchased, place a demand on the capacity of the treatment and collection system for processing and treat possible effluent whether in service or not; and ,

WHEREAS, the Rio Dell City Council, by means of written resolution, is authorized to fix and determine rates and charges for wastewater service provided by the City to all of its users; and,

WHEREAS, new guidance from the City’s wastewater consultant has determined that a minor correction to Exhibit A is needed.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Rio Dell that this Resolution rescinds Exhibit A of Resolution 1536-2022 and replaces said Exhibit with the Exhibit A of this Resolution No. 1662-2026. All other components of Resolution No. 1536-2022 shall remain in full force and effect.

Further, The City Manager is authorized to refund the difference in cost related to the change in strength classification for the impacted customers to July 1, 2025.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regularly scheduled council meeting of the City of Rio Dell held on February 23, 2026 by the following vote:

Ayes:
Noes:
Abstain:
Absent:

Debra Garnes, Mayor

ATTEST:

Karen Dunham, City Clerk

Exhibit A

Strength Classifications into Low, Domestic, Medium, and High Strength Dischargers

Low Strength	Banks & Financial Institutions Barber Shops Hair Salon (hair cutting only) Dry Cleaners Laundromats Offices - Business and Professional Offices - Medical/Dental (without surgery) Post Offices Retail Stores Schools without cafeteria Car Wash
Domestic Strength	Residential - All Appliance Repair Auto Dealers - without Service Facilities Nail Salons Pet Groomers Bars & Taverns - without dining Camp Ground or RV Park Churches, Halls & Lodges Fire Stations Hotels, Motels, B&Bs, and Vacation Rentals (W/O restaurant) Libraries Rest Homes Shoe Repair Shops Theaters Warehouses Car Washes - Self Service High Tech Medical Manufacturing Light Manufacturing/Industrial Mobile Home Park Gas Station Gym or Health Club Schools with cafeteria Auto Dealers - with Service Facilities Machine Shops Service Stations, Garages, Auto Repair Shops Coffee Shops – W/O Dish Washer, Garbage Disposal, Grease Trap & Food Preparation
Medium Strength	Restaurants - W/O Dish Washer & Garbage Disposal Mini Marts - W/O Dish Washer & Garbage Disposal Mini Mart with Gas Pumps - W/O Dish Washer & Garbage Disposal Catering - W/O Dish Washer & Garbage Disposal Hotel/Motel with Restaurant Beauty Shops (hair cutting w/additional treatments) Hospitals - General, Convalescent & Veterinarian Medical Offices - with Surgery Dental Offices
High Strength	Restaurants - with Dish Washer or Garbage Disposal Coffee Shops - with Dish Washer or Garbage Disposal

Catering - with Dish Washer or Garbage Disposal
Bakeries
Butcher Shops
Fish Market/Shop
Markets - with Dish Washer or Garbage Disposal
Markets - with Bakeries or Butcher Shops
Mini Marts - with Dish Washer or Garbage Disposal
Wineries
Cheese Makers
Dairy Products (milk producers, yogurt, ice cream maker)
Specialty Foods Manufacturing (e.g., olive oil maker)
Ice Cream Shop
Tasting Rooms
Spa with Various Beauty Treatments
Funeral Homes/ Mortuary

Debra Garnes, Mayor

ATTEST:

Karen Dunham, City Clerk

Exhibit A

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Wineries
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Dairy Products (milk producers, yogurt, ice cream maker)
Specialty Foods Manufacturing (e.g., olive oil maker)
Ice Cream Shop
Tasting Rooms
Spa with Various Beauty Treatments
Funeral Homes/ Mortuary