

COUNTY OF PLUMAS
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

DATE: June 5, 2025
TIME: 10:00 a.m.

LOCATION: Plumas County Courthouse Building
Board of Supervisors Chambers
Room 308
520 Main Street
Quincy, CA 95971

THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE VIRTUALLY AS FOLLOWS

Zoom Meeting / View and Verbal Public Comment Opportunity:

Members of the public who wish to watch live and provide public comment on any item on the agenda can join via the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/92668567598?pwd=T21qNFFGem1PWXBUIUFFZSnJwZEIKdz09>

Call: 1-669-900-9128

Meeting ID: 926 6856 7598

Passcode: 461910

Written Public Comment Opportunity:

Members of the public may submit written comments on any matter within the Commission's subject matter jurisdiction (Plumas County Code Title 2, Chapter 2, Article 1, Sec. 2-2.107 – Duties), regardless of whether the matter is on the agenda for Commission consideration or action. Comments will be entered into the administrative record of the meeting. Members of the public are strongly encouraged to submit their comments on agenda and non-agenda items before and/or during the Planning Commission meeting, using e-mail address publicplanningcommission@countyofplumas.com

www.countyofplumas.com

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS



In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Planning Commission Clerk at 530-283-6207. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the County to make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility. Auxiliary aids and services are available for persons with disabilities.

Note: *A majority of the Board of Supervisors may be present and may participate in discussion.*

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Chris Spencer, Vice-Chair	(District 1)
VACANT	(District 2)
Jack Montgomery	(District 3)
Dayne Lewis	(District 4)
Harvey West, Chair	(District 5)

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

A. *None*

V. CONSENT ITEMS

A. *Items to be continued or withdrawn from the agenda*

- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 15, 2025
Motion: Approval of the Meeting Minutes of May 15, 2025
Moved by Chris Spencer **Seconded by** Jack Montgomery
Vote: Motion carried.
Yes: Lewis, Montgomery, Spencer, West

VI. 2021 WILDFIRES LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLAN STANDING UPDATE

Planning Director Tracey Ferguson reminded Commissioners that the Board of Supervisors has allotted funding for a limited 3-year term Disaster Recovery Coordinator position. She stated candidates have applied and interviews are taking place. Ferguson explained the interview panel consists of Supervisor Kevin Goss, Planning Director Tracey Ferguson, Grant Manager Zachary Gately, Executive Director of Plumas Rural Services Paula Johnston, and Plumas County Office of Emergency Services Manager Lori Pini. She stated the position is funded beginning July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028. Ferguson stated she has been acting as the de facto Disaster Recovery Coordinator since 2022. She stated there are currently twenty-one active disaster recovery projects and the partnership between the County and the Dixie Fire Collaborative continues. Commissioner Harvey West asked if applicants were required to be a Plumas County resident as part of the position. Ferguson replied it was not explicitly stated. She explained the position required emergency management and disaster recovery experience as well as frequent engagement with recovery stakeholders and associated collaborative efforts.

Ferguson informed Commissioners of the Special Meeting of the Board of Supervisors on June 6, 2025, at 10AM at the Indian Valley Academy Library in Greenville. She stated staff will explain the criteria the Board of Supervisors adopted to be used to prioritize PG&E settlement funds. She stated the Auditor-Controller Martee Nieman will present on obligated and available funds.

VII. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS/COMMENTS

Commissioner Chris Spencer reported ongoing livestock losses due to gray wolves.

Commissioner Jack Montgomery reported productive conversations during the May 28, 2025, meeting with the Plumas Housing Council (PHC). He stated the PHC is shifting to focus on facilitating information to the community. Ferguson asked if the PHC discussed their governance structure. Montgomery replied the PHC is still discussing how to best structure themselves.

Commissioner Lewis reported the local Rite Aid is permanently closing. County Counsel Sara James stated Supervisor Mimi Hall had addressed the closure at the Board of Supervisors meeting on June 3, 2025. She stated the Quincy Pharmacy currently accepts most insurance providers and is considering expanding hours to accommodate increased demand. Lewis recognized the efforts of the Quincy Chamber of Commerce in improving the appearance of downtown Quincy. He announced First Friday will be June 6, 2025, and will be held in downtown Quincy. Lewis reiterated the idea of using the PG&E settlement funds to establish a grant to aid residents with increased insurance costs, similar to the existing grant program offered by the Plumas Association of Realtors.

VIII. RE-NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – STANIGER ZONE CHANGE (ZC 9-23/24-10) (Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director)

Ferguson stated that California Government Code Section 65854, effective January 1, 2025 (Assembly Bill 2904) requires local agencies to give at minimum a 20-day notice of a public hearing on any decision that affects the permitted uses of real property. She stated this law became known to staff on April 18, 2025. She reminded Commissioners that Resolution 2501 had been approved by the Planning Commission. The Staniger Zone Change Planning Commission public hearing of March 20, 2025, was

given 10 days' public notice; and therefore, to remedy the noticing requirements, the Staniger Zone Change was re-noticed on May 15, 2025, to return to the Planning Commission on June 5, 2025.

Ferguson cited public concerns about the number of animals that would be permitted with the proposed zone change. She reminded attendees that staff are directed to process applications on behalf of applicants in accordance with Plumas County Code. She informed Commissioners that additional public comment had been received since the May 6, 2025, Board of Supervisors meeting on this item.

Spencer asked if the County requirements had been satisfied. James stated the CEQA elements had been satisfied through the application process. Spencer then asked if the Commissioners were to consider economic or social factors in their decision. James replied that those factors were not part of the analysis. Ferguson clarified that there are criteria to consider social and economic factors under CEQA, but that criteria had not been met in this case. Spencer stated public comments paralleled economic and social factors while acknowledging CEQA elements had been met. Ferguson pointed to the first sentence of CEQA15064(e) which states "Economic and social changes resulting from a project shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment." Ferguson read a public comment that stated Staniger was citing economic and social need as the reason for the suggested zone change.

Spencer clarified that the forest work done on the property was done in collaboration with CAL FIRE as a fuels reduction project that would have occurred outside the zone change application. Montgomery stated the Plumas County General Plan 2035 dictates the need to balance economic and social considerations in land use decisions. He expressed concern about how the scope of the project is currently defined. Ferguson reiterated the application is for a Farming Animal combining zone (F) overlay of nine acres, that would allow for eighteen hooved animals. James advised that social and economic changes are not significant environmental effects, but they can be used to determine if a physical change is significant. She stated the application process requires first determining if a project is compliant with CEQA, then determining if it is consistent with the County General Plan. Lewis emphasized that a zone change is not conditional and would permanently permit eighteen hooved livestock on the property. James pointed out that the County analysis considered that current zoning of Suburban (S-1) currently contains allowances for animals.

Commissioner West opened the public hearing at 11:07 am:

Jill Theriault opposes the zone change citing concerns of proximity to farm animals, smell, perceived conflicting language between the applicant's application and verbal communication of intent.

Cindy Mansell opposes the zone change citing concerns of unpredicted proximity to a farm and lack of perimeter fencing. She stated Staniger proposed the idea of selling the property to a developer. She stated Staniger offered to sell the property to Mansell for 2.5 times the original purchase price. She expressed concerns over rezoning the property when the current owner may be ready to sell.

Staniger addressed the previous comments, stating that there was no consideration of free-range animals. She stated the original application listed 4-H as one of many possible considerations for her family. Ferguson asked Staniger to clarify if the property was presently for sale or if an offer of sale had been made to the neighbors. Staniger responded that the stress of the process led to her suggesting the "most vocal" neighbors purchase the property at a price recommended by a realtor.

Chief Code Enforcement Officer Jennifer Langston inquired as to whether any structures have been built, or if grading has been done on the property. Ferguson replied no structures have yet been built. Staniger stated the CAL FIRE Emergency Timber Operations Fuel Hazard Reduction Project required three landing zones. She stated these zones were established with consideration for where Staniger planned to build structures.

Curt Theriault opposes the zone change citing concerns of increased predation and the slope of the lot causing waterflow and erosion to carry onto his property. He stated he believed Staniger's intention is to house animals on the north end of the property, but expressed worry over future use if the property was sold.

Lena North opposes the zone change citing concerns of spot zoning creating inconsistency in the area and conflicting land use.

John Mansell opposes the zone change citing concerns of suitability for farm animals, presence of open-range farming, and negative impact of surrounding neighbors "for the benefit of one."

Bruce North opposes the zone change citing concerns of inappropriate slope for livestock, water runoff and erosion depositing contaminants onto neighboring properties, and compliance with County code regarding animal waste cleanup.

Sue Wickman opposes the zone change citing concerns of conflict with intended land use per the General Plan, and the lack of an Environmental Impact Report.

Bill Wickman opposes the zone change citing concerns over the appropriateness of the area for animal agriculture, social and economic change due to the presence of livestock near adjacent properties, erosion of sensitive soils, and water runoff and erosion depositing contaminants onto neighboring properties. He stated he attempted to compromise with Staniger following the Board of Supervisors' direction. He stated Staniger declined to enter into a legal agreement barring animals from the southern portion of the Staniger property. He cited concerns of future owners placing animals on the southern half of the property should Staniger choose to sell.

Staniger stated decreasing the acreage would result in increased animal density and negatively impact the land. She stated her intent is to implement rotational pasture grazing, but did not plan to build a perimeter fence. She stated she wished to introduce rotational hog grazing on the southern half of the property to mitigate the damage done by the logging company and "heal the land." She stated animals would not be kept on the southern half of the parcel. She claimed increasing the buffer would not satisfy the concerns of other parties, claiming a "conflict of desire" between neighbors. She claimed her consultation with a realtor resulted in no predicted property value reduction. Ferguson asked about the skid trails and water bars observed during the staff's site visit. West asked if CAL FIRE returned and signed off on the skid trails and water bars. Staniger replied they had been inspected three times and approved by CAL FIRE.

Ferguson referenced the staff report, stating the erosional effects would be mitigated through proposed seeding and rotational grazing efforts. West asked for clarification regarding fencing. Staniger reported that hotwire would be installed for the grazing area as well as secondary fencing. Bill Wickman expressed concern that the southern portion of the land is now "highly disturbed," and claimed erosion would be a greater issue for neighboring properties. He recommended reducing the Farming zone overlay to exclude the southern portion of the property.

Ferguson reiterated the proposal in front of the Commissioners is for a nine-acre Farm Animal (F) combining zone. Staniger and Wickman discussed the feasibility of compromising by reducing the acreage to exclude the southern portion of the overlay. Commissioner Lewis reiterated the parcel would not be able to accommodate eighteen cattle, stating the parcel is unsuitable for larger hoofed animal livestock.

Motion: Continue the public hearing to the next meeting of the Planning Commission to allow for additional conversations between Planning staff, the owner/applicant, and neighbors in pursuit of a compromise with possible revision to Exhibit "A" map to Planning Commission Resolution Number P.C. 2025-01.

Moved by: Jack Montgomery **Seconded by:** Harvey West

Vote: Motion carried.

Yes: Lewis, Montgomery, Spencer, West

Ferguson stated that staff would continue to work with the applicant to discuss increasing the buffer on the southern border of the suggested zone change, thereby reducing the overall acreage.

IX. 2024-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP #5

- A. *Ferguson informed Commissioners that staff had reviewed programs from Housing Element 6th Cycle. She explained that staff will be referencing Sierra County's Goals, Policies, and Actions and identifying what may be relevant to Plumas County.*

Ferguson recapped the Inclusionary Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Trust fund had been removed from the Housing Element 7th Cycle (HE). Under Program 8, Development Review and Processing Procedures, West recommended changing the review cycle from annually to biannually. Ferguson stated it would be taken into consideration in accordance with State requirements. Montgomery inquired about the amount of time an annual review typically takes. Ferguson responded that department procedures are regularly being evaluated and updated to be more efficient.

Ferguson summarized previous discussions update the time limits in Program 6, Camping Time Limits, from 120 days to 180 days. The previous HE cycles proposed the removal of the time limit to allow living in a Recreational Vehicle (RV) full time, provided health and safety conditions are met. She questioned the appropriateness of this allowance outside of a registered mobile home park. Montgomery asked if Program 6 could be amended to cite the Plumas County Camping Ordinance (PCC 9-2.405). Ferguson recommended updating the language to reflect the intent to modify the Camping Time Limit. Ferguson asked Langston if Code Enforcement was able to use a calendar function in Cloudpermit to enforce camping time limits. Langston replied that the capability to use a calendar is currently limited but suggested the possibility of using a permitting system through the Building Department using dates. Lewis commented that would be reliant upon an honor system. Ferguson replied that the existence of a paper trail would proactively help Code Enforcement ensure compliance and track non-registered camps. Montgomery suggested a written warning for those identified as unregistered. Langston stated there is an ongoing issue of unpermitted RVs accessing water resources without compensating the community services districts. Lewis stated he appreciates the idea of a structured permitting process for camping.

Ferguson stated the definition of "family" had been updated to comply with Federal and State requirements under Program 8, "Reasonable Accommodation and Housing for Persons with Disabilities." She stated that the County still needs to adopt a written procedure regulating reasonable accommodations for housing.

Regarding Program 9, "Transitional and Supportive Housing and Navigation Centers," Ferguson stated the North Star Navigation Center is a qualifying entity. She stated the County is currently up to compliant with Program 10 "Accessory Dwelling Units" (ADUs) through 2024, but new regulations on ADUs are regularly released. She advised updating the language to "ensure consistency with State law."

Program 11 "Density Bonus Program" could incentivize developers to build at one-and-a-half times the allowable density. Montgomery asked if the Zoning Ordinance had been updated based on the previous HE. Ferguson replied, it has not been updated to-date.

Under Program 13 "Preserve Assisted Units" Ferguson stated the units examined are under 55-year covenants, none of which are presently at risk of expiring. Lewis asked if upon expiration, the units could be sold. Ferguson explained they could be sold and adjusted to market-rate.

Under Program 14, "Rehabilitation program" Ferguson explained the Plumas County Community Development Commission (PCCDC) may have a housing rehabilitation program. She stated staff would communicate with PCCDC to obtain status. Lewis asked if interested parties could inquire with PCCDC. Ferguson responded interested parties may visit the PCCDC office in Quincy on Main Street.

Under Program 16, Ferguson stated "Fair Housing," the County will support and cooperate with the PCCDC to ensure federal requirements are met and to distribute information to the public. Ferguson informed Commissioners that the PCCDC Board of Directors allocated 35-40 Project Based Vouchers

to aid the development of affordable housing. She recommended adding a program to memorialize the Project Based Vouchers.

Ferguson informed Commissioners that conditions for Program 19, "Housing Condition Survey," had not been met. She stated the goal is to capture an inventory of dilapidated and substandard housing units. Lewis asked if residents could be connected with rehabilitative services. Ferguson responded yes, that is a goal of the program. Ferguson notified the Commissioners she received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to conduct a countywide housing study. Montgomery asked if the Building Department could help facilitate. Ferguson agreed they could. Ferguson asked Langston about the state of housing stock in Plumas County. Langston notified the Commission there are 40 unsafe, red-tagged and 14 substandard documented housing units that are open and occupied in Plumas County. Spencer raised the issue of non-owner-occupied units where owners lack either interest or capacity to update properties. Montgomery asked if the program is primarily to identify dangerous dwelling structures. Ferguson replied it would be a public health and safety practice. Langston stated Code Enforcement has been working with the Plumas Crisis Intervention and Resource Center (PCIRC) to aid individuals in unsafe housing. She stated for the County to revitalize dilapidated buildings without owner consent, a court order would be required and the cost would be directed to the owner. She stated failure to pay would result in the property being sold. Spencer stated rural communities attract unique individuals who typically desire greater separation from governance. Spencer stated employee housing on Sierra Valley ranches has been beneficial.

Under Program 20 "Employee Housing," Ferguson explained employee housing is permitted by right in zones Agricultural Preserve and General Agricultural and cannot be considered different than any other agricultural use. She added employee housing must include agricultural workers who do not work on the property where the employee housing is located. She recommended inspecting employee housing within Plumas County for health and safety compliance.

Ferguson discussed government incentives to ensure affordable housing under Program 21, "Housing for Lower Income and Extremely Low-Income Households." She discussed the possibility of transitioning old motels into Single Room Occupancy (SROs). Montgomery asked if the concept was similar to condo conversions from short term to long term residency. Ferguson explained the conversion would be to long-term rentals. She explained to be occupied longer than thirty days, each room would require a kitchen, potentially requiring renovation. Montgomery asked if funding would be provided by the County for conversions. Ferguson replied there is the potential for allocated grants and alternative funding sources from HCD. Montgomery asked if Plumas County needed to provide specific criteria for the conversion. Ferguson replied that property owners would need to comply with Plumas County Code and the definition of a "dwelling unit." She recommended keeping the program and directing staff to continue research on the matter.

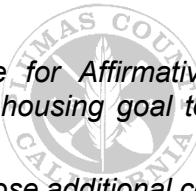
Ferguson announced Program 22, "Emergency Shelter Development," had been removed because it had been completed.

Ferguson discussed collaborating with the PCCDC to educate local landlords on Section 8 to develop additional housing options in Plumas County under Program 23, "Housing Choice Voucher Program."

Under Program 24, "Water and Sewer Infrastructure," Ferguson announced staff were looking into actionable projects for which staff could apply for funding. Spencer recommended the current language "seek funding" be made more specific. Ferguson recommended including language to specify projects that have been through Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM).

Ferguson updated language in Program 25, "Community Development Block Grant Funding," to reflect the County is applying for CDBGs in addition to supporting PCCDC in their applications. Lewis asked what the purpose of CDBGs is. Ferguson responded projects can pertain to planning, economic development, and infrastructure.

Ferguson reviewed the goals, policies, and actions from the Sierra County Housing Element with Commissioners. She explained Commissioners are to extract the related policies and implementation



measures required by the State for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). Ferguson recommended adding an overall housing goal to the Housing Element 7th cycle. Commissioners agreed.

Commissioners agreed to not impose additional construction requirements beyond those mandated by the State to ensure health and safety. Commissioners agreed to evaluate how the County may draft a policy meant to promote consideration of providing additional land for residential development through re-zoning or surplus lands. Ferguson explained the State requires no net loss for residentially zoned land.

County Counsel Josh Brechtel replaced Sara James for the remainder of the meeting.

Ferguson stated the County's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Division recently organized a list of County-owned properties. Brechtel stated County Counsel is working with HCD to surplus a County-owned property to Plumas District Hospital. Ferguson evaluated how the County may develop programs to increase the supply of permanent rental housing. She discussed recruiting more landlords to accept Section 8 and partnerships with local initiatives like the Lease to Locals program. Lewis reinforced the importance of educating local landlords on Section 8.

Ferguson confirmed the County considers manufactured homes to be no different than any single-family residence. Ferguson confirmed the County allows and promotes Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) in accordance with State law. Ferguson discussed Policy 2.5, stating the County shall allow, by right housing developments with at least 20 percent affordable housing parcels zoned Multiple-Family Residential. Lewis asked if this related to the recently removed Inclusionary Housing Program. Ferguson stated it did not. West asked if the verbiage "by right" required an ordinance. Ferguson confirmed there is usually an additional implementation measure, but the policy dictates the County will "allow," not "require." Ferguson confirmed the County promotes employee housing.

The Commission agreed that the County will support low income and special needs housing development through helping to identify appropriate sites, applying for funds that will include the cost of permit fees and inspections on behalf of housing providers, and offering incentives like density bonuses to developers for affordable housing. Ferguson confirmed the State required informational handouts be available online and at County office, libraries, and public agencies. Lewis questioned the practicality of placing handouts targeted at developers in libraries, stating the Planning Department office is the nexus for information. Ferguson reiterated these were the minimum requirements from the State.

Commissioner Montgomery had to leave the meeting early.

Ferguson stated staff needed to draft HE policies zoning code amendments and check for compliance. Ferguson discussed the possibility of allowing employee housing on parcels zoned for single family residential. She discussed a possible allowance through the ADU ordinance. Lewis brought up the need for employee housing for the Forest Service as well as agricultural employees.

Ferguson discussed the feasibility of a no-cost tentative map amendment to allow for the development of higher density affordable housing. She confirmed that Plumas County had already adopted an ADU ordinance. She stated the State is continuously releasing ADU requirements, and staff will work to keep policies in compliance. Ferguson confirmed policies are in place to ensure the County continues to enforce building and safety codes. She stated staff needed to reconnect with the representative from the USDA Rural Development Single Family Housing Rehabilitation Program to aid in securing funding for home rehabilitation. Ferguson discussed the possibility of focusing Code Enforcement efforts in areas of greater need.

Ferguson highlighted the County measure to mitigate the impacts of fire and flood particularly on vulnerable communities. She recommended staff further research into the implementation measure.

Ferguson recommended adding a hazard mitigation program, stating the County already meets certain measures through implementation of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

- B. Ferguson presented the 2025 State Income Limits. The Area Median Income for Plumas County as of 2025 is \$95,300 for a family of four.

X. **REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON JUNE 19, 2025, CANCELLED DUE TO COUNTY HOLIDAY; SCHEDULE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION IN JUNE 2025 (Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director)**

Motion: To schedule a Special Meeting of the Planning Commission for 1PM on Wednesday, June 18, 2025, and cancel the regularly scheduled meeting for July 3, 2025.

Moved by: Chris Spencer **Seconded by:** Dayne Lewis

Vote: Motion Carried

Yes: Spencer, Lewis West

Absent: Montgomery

XI. **INFORMATION ITEMS/ON-GOING PROJECT UPDATES**

- A. Ferguson informed Commissioners the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) ordinance would be presented to the Board of Supervisors for adoption on June 10, 2025. Ferguson stated the primary concerns of the public are the potential for increased insurance rates and the modeling methodology that resulted in areas being classified moderate, high, or very high FHSZ. She stated there are shared concerns by the public and the Board of Supervisors that hazard levels can be increased but not decreased. Ferguson stated she included a clause within the ordinance expressing frustration at the lack of discretion at the local level. She stated that she will also be drafting a letter to the State advocating for a bill that allows for greater autonomy in local discretion. West asked if the website contained a comparison of the old LRA FHSZ map and the revised version. Ferguson replied, yes.

XII. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

1. 2024-2029 Housing Element Update Public Workshop #6 – schedule special meeting on June 18, 2025
2. Review of goals and policies of the 2035 Plumas County General Plan Agriculture & Forestry Element – meeting of July 17, 2025
3. Brown Act Training for Planning Commissioners – meeting of July 17, 2025
4. Draft a Planning Commission resolution to the Board of Supervisors recommending to officially recognize the Plumas Housing Council – date to be determined

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion: To a Special Meeting scheduled for June 18, 2025.

Moved by: Chris Spencer **Seconded by:** Dayne Lewis

Vote: Motion Carried

Yes: Spencer, Lewis West

Absent: Montgomery