

COUNTY OF PLUMAS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

DATE: March 19, 2026
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

Although the County strives to offer remote participation, please be advised that remote Zoom participation is provided for convenience only. In the event of a technological malfunction, the only assurance of live comments being received by the Commission is to attend in person or submit written comments as outlined below. Except for a noticed, teleconference meeting, the Planning Commission reserves the right to conduct the meeting without remote access if the County is experiencing technical difficulties.

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: 10:02 a.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spencer, Jack Montgomery, Dayne Lewis, Harvey West

Absent: Richard Foster

IV. **PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY: Opened at 10:03 a.m.**

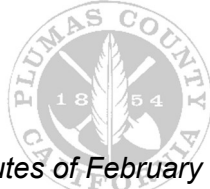
Leila Levi stood for public comment to state that she is the owner of Genesee farms. She read **allowed** **aloud** a comment previously submitted to the Planning Commission in writing:

“My name is Leila Levi, and I am the owner of Genesee Farm. I am here today to ask for fairness, transparency, and accountability in how projects are reviewed and supported in this County. Over the past year, my farm has been subjected to repeated illegal spot enforcement actions and ongoing harassment from Tracey Ferguson. I have consistently worked to respond, comply, and operate in good faith. However, this pattern of spot enforcement has created a significant strain on running a small, rural, agricultural business. At the same time, despite my land being devastated by the Dixie Fire and receiving no meaningful County support, I have learned that the Planning Department is now supporting the Dixie Fire Canopy Project to establish a nursery in this same small community. I am already years ahead in developing this type of agricultural operation. Yet while my progress has been slowed by an entire year - through harassment, the County is now supporting a competing project that does not yet exist. This raises serious conflict of interest and ethical concerns. This is about whether there is a level playing field. We are a very small rural economy. There is not enough market demand to support multiple nursery operations at scale. When a government-supported project enters that space—especially while an existing business is under regulatory pressure—it is malfeasance when the same department enforcing regulations is also supporting a competing operation, it creates the appearance of a conflict of interest and undermines public trust. This is about whether small, local operators can expect fair treatment. It is about whether enforcement is applied evenly and fairly, and whether this Commission will ensure that County processes remain neutral, transparent, and fair. I am asking for three things: First, that you carefully evaluate any County involvement, funding, or support of a nursery project in this area, with full consideration of its impact on existing local agricultural businesses. Second, that any conflicts of interest—real or perceived—are openly addressed before moving forward, especially in light of Tracey’s harassment, and that our senator’s office and the state Land Use Department had to get involved in to protect me. And third, that the County commit to consistent, fair enforcement practices that do not disadvantage small local operators, especially in order to favor others. I am asking that the County operate in a way that allows local businesses like mine to survive—and to compete fairly. Thank you for your time, Leila Levi.”

Terri Simon Jackson stood for public comment to say she had been asked about County General Plan open-space element updates by several entities such as the Feather River Land Trust and open-space landowners. She stated that the County is required by state law to update open-space policies based on Senate Bill 1425 from 2022 and the assembly bill 1889 from 2024, known as the “Room to Roam Act” and encouraged as much participation as possible in the planning process by local landowners and applicable agencies.

Josh Hart Director from Feather River Action and Plumas Wired commented through Zoom to state the Feather River Action’s goal is to protect the Feather River Watershed and promote community while educating them about the impacts of wireless data and the benefits of wired technology. He stated he is unsatisfied with the Powerline Road cell tower project in Greenville and that it was allowed to be built with only a building permit. It was located 1,000 feet from a residential zone which appears to Hart as a project that should have required a special use permit and the fact that it wasn’t makes that project illegal according to the Telecommunications Ordinance Section 9-2.4106(b).

Elisa Adler stood for public comment to state that she would like the County to consider how to incorporate sustainable energy and sustainable practices without further degrading Plumas County agricultural lands. She would like open-spaces and agricultural lands to remain un-industrialized.



V. CONSENT ITEMS

A. None

B. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2026.

Motion: To approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2026.

Moved by: Dayne Lewis **Seconded by:** Jack Montgomery

Yes: Lewis, Spencer, West, Montgomery

Absent: Foster

VI. 2021 WILDFIRES LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLAN STANDING UPDATE

Tracey Ferguson reports on the Plumas County employment and economic development, housing, and tourism survey available through March 31, 2026. She encourages all members of the public to complete the surveys to help the County understand current conditions and identify strategies moving forward and report the findings back to the public.

VII. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS/COMMENTS

No reports/comments from the Planning Commissioners.

VIII. ORDINANCE WORKSHOP #2 – ARTICLE 41, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, CHAPTER 2 ZONING, TITLE 9 PLANNING AND ZONING OF THE PLUMAS COUNTY CODE PURSUANT TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RESOLUTION OF INTENTION NO. 2025-90 (Tim Evans, Senior Planner)

Tim Evans, Senior Planner, presents a review of Ordinance Workshop # 1 on February 5, 2026. Evans stated that 4 comments were received about Ordinance Workshop #1, 3 of which provided example ordinances from other counties for reference. He also addressed some comments and reiterates that prior to Article 41 being developed, a telecommunications ordinance didn't exist to regulate the design and placement of telecom structures, and as a result, telecom building permits were exempt from planning and zoning review.

Evans goes on to clarify for commentators that the discussion from February 5, 2026, Planning Commission meeting entailed two separate items: the Frank's Code Amendment, regarding Lot Line adjustments and the Article 41 Telecommunications Ordinance regarding telecommunications facility designs and locations. He also addressed comments of confusion about which zones are considered "exempt," stating that new towers and poles are subject to Special Use Permits in all zones, exempt Timberland Production Zone (TPZ). Further, Ferguson commented that in the Open Space (OS) and Lake (L) zoning districts, telecom facilities are a use 'not allowed.'

Elisa asked how the telecommunications ordinance fits in with the General Plan and how it was created as an ordinance in context of the General Plan having been written before cell towers existed in Plumas County. Evans answered that General Plan Land-Use Element Policy 1.9.1 directs the County to undertake necessary and appropriate zoning code and map changes to promote and encourage appropriate location for cell tower facilities. Ferguson adds that in December 2013 the 2035 General Plan was adopted and then in January 2019, the telecom ordinance was passed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors and has not been amended since then.

~~Cinnamon Jones Cruz stood for public comment to state that Evans' phrasing about telecommunication towers being exempt prior to the telecom ordinance being adopted was incorrect since all telecom facilities should have been required to undertake permit processing even without a telecom ordinance in place. She also stated that Franks Code Amendment is corrupt because it can be used to side-step the discretionary permitting process, including all environmental review, making it desirable for cell tower development. She says it has been determined by the courts that piecemealing is illegal.~~

Cinnamon Cruz Jones stood for public comment and stated the following:

"I just wanted to respond to what Tim said. He's twice said that without the telecom ordinance we had no protections and that it was just exempt but that is not true. Any building structure has basic zoning laws and those would have applied to telecom. They wouldn't have been very easy to apply because a 35-foot height limit isn't going to be very functional for Verizon. But we did have protections and it would have meant that we needed a variance or a special use permit for those facilities. It's not like they would have just automatically gone through with no protections."

And then the second thing is the Franks Code Amendment. Lot line adjustments are extremely significant for development. This is known. I imagine you know. If you don't know, you should. It happens over and over that people want to develop something and they can't. They just need a little road access, or they need a little utility access and they get a lot line adjustment—and they capture that. That avoids them having to grade an entirely new road and go through environmental review. So lot line adjustments can easily be used to bypass environmental review and that is why Franks Code Amendment is so significant for telecom development."

And it has been determined by the courts that piecemealing is illegal. So when you take one code and then you make another a code, which are apparently separate, but they function together to enable a project to move forward—like a tower. That is considered piecemealing. That is not legal."

Montgomery asks if the Planning Commission should address the TPZ topic separately from the broader amendments to the telecommunications ordinance. County Counsel Sara James states any changes will require ordinance amendments but could be approached as one full amendment or performed separately, one amendment at a time. Montgomery states that he believes TPZ ordinance amendments should be addressed as soon as possible.

Spencer expresses concern and states that these amendments should not be made hastily.

Ferguson discusses the range of possibilities for TPZ amendments.

Evans reads the definitions of "residential zones."

Amanda Harmon displays the countywide electronic zoning map on the presentation screen for reference to TPZ zoned lands.

The Planning Commission discusses the possibility of amending the ordinance to require a Special Use Permit in all cases and zones for new telecommunication towers or poles. Spencer states she is weary that this option could lead to additional staff time and resources.

Lewis expresses his preference that all telecommunication towers should require a SUP in all zones so that they may be subject to public, environmental, and economical compatibility review. Lewis asks why the TPZ section was written as is, and Evans explains that it was to incentivize telecommunications companies to build towers away from residential zones.

Ferguson suggests the Planning Commission could begin amendments with the TPZ zoned lands, noticing distance, and Tribal communications and then in the future investigate ordinance loopholes.

Josh Hart commented through Zoom that public comments should be heard before Commissioners discuss the topics at hand and that some assumptions about TPZ areas being separated from residential areas are incorrect. On Powerline Road, a telecommunications tower was put near a Native American cemetery. He stated this shows these towers can be placed in areas of significance. He states it is the Planning Commission's responsibility to consider all the impacts that cell towers can have on the public. He suggests that they remove the TPZ exemption and add a 1,500 ft public notification limit and come back to address the long-term issues. He goes on to explain the medical harm caused by telecommunication towers.

Elisa Adler asks if there is any way to eliminate economic incentives for allowing the construction of telecommunications towers on private lands, such as putting them on public lands so that the funds go to public resources.

Cinnamon Jones Cruz stood for public comment and stated that a strong telecommunications ordinance is not anti-technology, it is a legal risk management tool. Because of Plumas County's harsh mountain winter conditions, a permissive telecommunications ordinance that prioritizes industry profit and convenience over local safety is inadequate. She goes on to describe bleeding rust and other risks that should be protected against with stronger setbacks, inspection requirements, and climate-appropriate structural standards. She also offers her assistance and twenty-three years of experience in researching physiology and neuroscience relating to telecommunications. Ferguson asks Cruz to contact her to schedule a future meeting.

Selena Jayo stood for public comment to offer support to Lewis's preference to make Special Use Permits mandatory for all telecommunications towers, and to increase the buffer between residential and agricultural zones and telecommunications towers.

Patrick Presnell stood for public comment to discuss the difference between frequencies used by cellular towers and fixed wireless towers and states there should be different regulations between the two. He offers a handout packet to the Commissioners. Evans responds by referencing past decisions on fixed wireless, pulled from Ordinance Exemptions 9-2.405 subsection (i). Presnell states that wired connection is not a viable option for some residences in Plumas County due to geographic constraints.

West asks if fixed-wireless towers still need fiber to operate, and Presnell responds that it is not always necessary. Lewis asks if fiber-use requires trenching, and Presnell responds that it depends on whether the lines are over-head or not but generally trenching is not required.

Commissioners provided direction to Planning staff to bring back stricken language for Workshop #3, as follows:

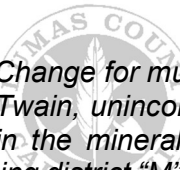
- 1. Remove the exemption for telecommunications facilities set forth in Sec. 9-2.4105(h) and revise Sec. 9-2.416(a) such that telecommunications facilities in the Timberland Production Zone ("TPZ") are subject to the same Zoning Clearance Certificate and Special Use Permit requirements as the other zoning districts.*
- 2. Address the comment opportunities for Tribes and Tribal members.*
- 3. Increase the public noticing distance beyond the statutorily-required 300 feet when a discretionary special use permit is required.*

IX. TIME CERTAIN 11:00 AM PUBLIC HEARING – PAPANOS GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND ZONE CHANGE (GPA 3-23/24-01) (Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director)

Proposed project is a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change of a property located at 24158 Highway 70, Twain (APN 002-410-018-000) (4.27 acres) to modify the Plumas County 2035 General Plan land use designation of "Mining Resource" and primary zoning district "M" (Mining) to a "Resort and Recreation" General Plan land use designation with a "Rec-P" (Prime Recreation) primary zoning district, while retaining the "SP-ScR" (Special Plan Scenic Road – Highway 70) and the "SP-ScA" (Special Plan Scenic Area – Feather River Canyon) combining zones.

Ferguson notes that staff's recommendation to deny has not changed since the proposed project was first heard in November 2025. She continues with a review of the staff report and proposed Resolution Number P.C. 2026-01. Ferguson notes the issues are because the proposed project does not comply and is inconsistent with 2035 Plumas County General Plan policies.

Ferguson continues with a description of Resolution Number P.C. 2026-01, clause C, which directs staff to work with County Counsel to bring forward one of the following to provide economic development and viability in the unincorporated areas of Plumas County:

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1. a General Plan Amendment/Zone Change for multiple parcels along a 1.5 mile stretch of Hwy. 70 in the vicinity of 24158 Highway 70, Twain, unincorporated Plumas County, Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 002-410-018-000 and within the mineral resource area from the land use designation of "Mining Resource" and primary zoning district "M" (Mining) to a "Resort and Recreation" General Plan land use designation with a "Rec-P" (Prime Recreation) primary zoning district; or
 2. an amendment to Plumas County Code, Title 9 Planning and Zoning, adding the "Camp ground" use as a permitted use in Mining ("M") zone subject to the issuance of a special use permit; or
 3. an amendment to Plumas County Code, Title 9 Planning and Zoning, adding "Recreational uses, including but not limited to walking, hiking, picnicking, camping, swimming, boating, fishing, hunting, or other outdoor games or sports for which facilities are provided for public participation" as a permitted use in Mining ("M") zone subject to the issuance of a special use permit.

Ferguson states the applicant was unavailable to attend the public hearing today but that she did speak with him previously and Bill Papanos communicated that he has hired an engineer to perform septic and leach field viability testing, with the engineer preliminarily communicating that the ground is adequate.

Sara James asks if the resolution might be split up and best done with A and B separate from clause C so that it will be clear to the Board of Supervisors that the original project is denied but that the Commissioners are recommending the County explore possible alternatives.

Montgomery asks if the change in activities allowed in the mining zone should be made known to other mining zone landowners. Ferguson replies that the general public, through the public noticing process, would be made aware of any future potential code amendment, but not expressly as individual landowners.

Spencer expresses preference to Resolution 2026-01 clause C, option #3.

Ferguson states the resolution can be amended, through a Planning Commission motion, to split up clauses A and B from C.

Motion: Pass and adopt Resolution Number P.C. 2026-01, including only clauses A and B, recommending to the Board of Supervisors to find the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) does not apply to the Papanos General Plan Amendment and Zone Change (GPA 3-23/24-01) because it is a project that is recommended to be disapproved (Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(5)) and is therefore statutorily exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15270 (Projects Which are Disapproved), subsection (a) which states: "CEQA does not apply to project which a public agency rejects or disapproves; and to deny the Papanos General Plan Amendment and Zone Change (GPA 3-23/24-01) based on the evidence provided in the record, with findings, that the proposed project does not comply and is inconsistent with the following 2035 Plumas County General Plan policies; further clause C is directed to come back to the Planning Commission for consideration in the form of a resolution of intention to the Board of Supervisors.

Moved by: Jack Montgomery **Seconded by:** Chris Spencer

Yes: Montgomery, Spencer, Lewis, West

Absent: Foster

X. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: 2035 PLUMAS COUNTY GENERAL PLAN DRAFT ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT (2025) (Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director)

Tracey Ferguson presents the 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report.

Terri Simon Jackson stood for public comment to stated she has been working with Caltrans on wildlife migration routes in the context of the "Room to Roam Act" and offers to bring her expertise and informational materials on the subject to the Commissioners.

Ferguson states the General Plan Elements section can be amended to include narrative under the Conservation and Open Space Element section explaining State legislation mandating updates to the Element, in addition to doing the same for the Public Health and Safety Element.

Elisa Adler stood for public comment asking for a statistical report on full-time versus second homes in Plumas County.

Lidia Hinojosa stood for public comment to introduce herself as the newly-hired Planning Department Executive Assistant.

Montgomery asks if tiny homes on wheels as dwelling units could be added to the future Plumas County Code review and amendments section to bring back to the Planning Commission for discussion.

Motion: Amend the 2025 General Plan Draft Annual Progress Report to include the following three items and then forward the Report to the Board of Supervisors for review and acceptance:

1. Add narrative to the “General Plan Elements” under the Public Health and Safety Element section explaining State legislation mandating updates to the Element.
2. Add narrative to the “General Plan Elements” under the Conservation and Open Space Element section explaining State legislation mandating updates to the Element.
3. Add “Tiny Homes on Wheels as a Dwelling Unit” under the “Future Plumas County Code, Title 9 Review and Amendments” section to include the concept of amending the Plumas County Code to create a prescriptive ordinance to allow, with conditions, ‘tiny homes on wheels’ as a ‘dwelling unit’ use for year-round occupation in zoning districts where dwelling units are permitted.

Moved By: Harvey West, **Seconded by:** Chris Spencer

Yes: Lewis, Spencer, Montgomery, West

Absent: Foster

XI. INFORMATION ITEMS/ON-GOING PROJECT UPDATES

It was noted that Board of Supervisors Resolution 2026-9108, Acknowledging the Plumas Housing Council and confirming the intent of becoming an Advisory Board Member, was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 10, 2026, with the appointment of Tracey Ferguson, Planning Director, as the member and Jack Montgomery, Planning Commissioner District 3, as the alternate.

The next Plumas Housing Council meeting will be in Greenville at the Legion from 10:00a.m. to 1:00p.m. on March 25, 2026.

XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Planning Commission Ordinance Workshop #3 – Article 41, Telecommunications, Chapter 2 Zoning, Title 9 Planning and Zoning of the Plumas County Code pursuant to Board of Supervisors Resolution of Intention No. 2025-9082 – April 2, 2026
2. Review of 2035 General Plan Agriculture & Forestry Element Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures – April 2, 2026
3. Status of 2024 – 2029 Plumas County General Plan Housing Element 7th Cycle Update in response to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) Review Letter dated November 14, 2025 – April 2, 2026

XIII. ADJOURNMENT to the regular meeting scheduled for April 2, 2026.

Motion: Adjourn to the regular meeting scheduled for April 2, 2026.

Moved By: Jack Montgomery **Seconded by:** Chris Spencer

Yes: West, Lewis, Spencer, Montgomery

Absent: Foster