

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NO. _____

On the motion of Supervisor
duly seconded by Supervisor
the following Resolution is adopted:

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ ADOPTING PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY GENERAL PLAN/LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM; DIRECTING STAFF TO SUBMIT THE GENERAL PLAN/LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM AMENDMENTS AND THE ACCOMPANYING AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNTY CODE THAT CONSTITUTE THE COUNTY'S LOCAL COASTAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TO THE COASTAL COMMISSION FOR CERTIFICATION; AND DETERMINING THAT THE AMENDMENTS ARE EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

WHEREAS, the General Plan/Local Coastal Program and County Code are periodically amended to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws, correct inconsistencies, improve the clarity, accuracy, and overall effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, amendments to the General Plan/Local Coastal Program and County Code may be required from time to time to address technical corrections, update references, and provide necessary improvements to the legal and regulatory framework within Santa Cruz County; and

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Cruz (the "County") updated the General Plan/Local Coastal Program and County Code in 2024 with the Sustainability Policy and Regulatory Update, which resulted in the further need for minor amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on April 9, 2025, to consider minor amendments to the General Plan/Local Coastal Program and County Code; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission adopted a resolution recommending adoption of the proposed amendments, finding they comply with the California Coastal Act; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors held a duly noticed public hearing on May 20, 2025, to review the recommended changes to the General Plan/Local Coastal Program and County Code.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED that the Board of Supervisors hereby:

1. Incorporates the foregoing Recitals as findings as though set forth within the body of this Resolution.
2. Finds and determines that the proposed amendments to the General Plan/LCP and County Code are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the "common sense" exemption, because the amendments and rezoning are minor in nature and will not have a significant effect on the environment, and therefore no additional environmental analysis is required.
3. Adopts the proposed amendments to the General Plan/Local Coastal Program as shown in Exhibit 1 attached hereto.
4. Finds and determines the proposed amendments to the General Plan/Local Coastal Program and the County Code are fully consistent with the Coastal Act and its goals and policies, including the protection of the overall quality of the coastal zone environment and its natural and artificial resources and the implementation of coordinated planning and development for mutually beneficial uses in the coastal zone.
5. Directs staff to submit the proposed amendments to the County General Plan/Local Coastal Program and the accompanying amendments to the County Code that constitute the County's Local Coastal Implementation Plan to the California Coastal Commission for certification.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this _____ day of _____, 2025 by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERVISORS:
NOES: SUPERVISORS:
ABSENT: SUPERVISORS:
ABSTAIN: SUPERVISORS:

Felipe Hernandez
Chair, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: _____
 Juliette Rezzato
 Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Signed by:

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Natalie Kirkish
ASSISTANT COUNTY COUNSEL

Exhibit 1: General Plan/Local Coastal Program Amendments

Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1-19, Section Title “Other County Planning Initiatives”

OTHER COUNTY PLANNING INITIATIVES

Aside from this General Plan/LCP, the County has undertaken several planning initiatives to address current and future challenges. Development of the Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan in 2014 followed development of the Climate Action Strategy (2013) to address the County’s response to long-term climate change. The County has since developed the latest Climate Action and Adaption Plan (CAAP) in place of the 2013 Climate Action Strategy (CAS). In the past several years, the County has focused on the need for quality economic development, and in 2013 began the development of an Economic Vitality Study. The results of the study supported the development of an Economic Development Vision and Strategy, adopted by the County Board of Supervisors on November 18, 2014. That document presents a vision for economic development centered around seven goals that address sustainable development, key economic sectors, public investment and infrastructure, community development, and promotion of the County’s economic strengths. The General Plan/LCP furthers the goals of the Economic Development Vision and Strategy.

In 2017 and 2018, the County embarked upon a public process to develop a County Strategic Plan for the County organization. The County Strategic Plan (2018) sets goals in six focus areas: Attainable Housing, Comprehensive Health and Safety, Dynamic Economy, Sustainable Environment, Reliable Transportation, and County Operational Excellence. The Santa Cruz County General Plan/LCP relates to each of these goals. In June 2019, the County also adopted an Operational Plan, with objectives and key steps identified that would implement the six County Strategic Plan goals. The 2018 County Strategic Plan and the 2019 Operational Plan efforts involved extensive public participation, and those plans have also informed development of the Santa Cruz County General Plan/LCP.

In 2018, the Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services Department (Parks Department) adopted a Santa Cruz County Parks Strategic Plan reflecting public input and a 10-year roadmap for improvement of County parks. The County Health Services Agency’s Community Health Improvement Plan (2018-2023) addresses quality of life and public health concerns in the community. The Santa Cruz County General Plan/LCP supports the policies and programs in these two documents. The plan also informs and coordinates with the Community Development and Infrastructure Department plans such as the Capital Improvement Plan and Public Works Design Criteria.

Finally, in December 2018 the County Board of Supervisors accepted the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor Vision and Guiding Principles for public and private improvements along Portola Drive and 41st Avenue in Pleasure Point. This document was accompanied by the Portola Drive Streetscape Concepts, which reimagines the way Portola Drive functions. The goals and

standards of these documents are included within the General Plan/LCP and implementing codes and design guidelines.

Chapter 2: Built Environment Element, pp. 2-2, Section Title “Relationship to Other Plans + Regulations”

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS + REGULATIONS

Santa Cruz County’s built environment is governed by the land use policies and implementation strategies in the text of this General Plan/Local Coastal Program (LCP) Land Use Plan, as well as land use and facilities maps and diagrams (Appendix B), resources and constraints maps (Appendix F), the ordinances contained in the Santa Cruz County Code (SCCC), and the Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines. There are also several adopted plans that provide more detailed guidelines, site-specific policies, and development standards for historic town centers and unique coastal neighborhoods. Together, these documents define where and how development should and should not occur; thereby regulating the quality of development, controlling the pace of development consistent with the availability of public facilities and services, and protecting the County’s natural resources and agricultural lands.

The Built Environment Element policies and implementation strategies are also aligned with other County and regional plans. For instance, this element implements the conceptual plans and strategies developed in the Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan. This element also implements the County’s Climate Action and Adaptation policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to energy use and transportation. The element includes commercial and mixed-use design and use policies and implementation measures that advance the County’s Economic Development Vision and Strategy and Economic Vitality Study. The element takes into account the public health goals of the County’s Community Health Improvement Plan, and furthers the County Strategic Plan, especially the goals for Attainable Housing, Sustainable Environment, and Dynamic Economy.

Chapter 2: Built Environment Element, pp. 2-76, Policy “BE-4.2.1”

BE-4.2.1 (LCP) Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) Coordination. Ensure that land use plans and development projects are aligned with the Santa Cruz County CAAP policies and priorities.

Chapter 2: Built Environment Element, pp. 2-76, Text Bubble “Climate Action Strategy”

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

In order to address climate change, the County of Santa Cruz has adopted the [2022 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan \(CAAP\)](#), which was developed by an interdepartmental working group. The 2022 CAAP includes the most current data on climate impacts for unincorporated Santa Cruz County. The 2022 CAAP is comprised of actionable steps towards reducing the

causes of global warming, adapting our communities to climate hazards, and ensuring the safety and well-being of those most vulnerable to climate change.

Chapter 2: Built Environment Element, pp. 2-78, Implementation Strategy “BE-4.2b (LCP)”

BE-4.2b (LCP) Implement policies and priorities identified in the Climate Action and Adaption Plan related to building design and construction. Periodically review the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and revise as needed considering changes in state and federal laws and regulations. (Responsibility: Office of Response, Recovery + Resilience, CDID, Board of Supervisors)

Chapter 2: Built Environment Element, pp. 2-86, Text Bubble “Local Coastal Program”

Local Coastal Program

Santa Cruz County’s Local Coastal Program includes:

1. A “Land Use Plan” that consists of selected General Plan policies, land use maps and tables that are marked “(LCP).”
2. A “Local Coastal Implementation Program” that consists of chapters in Santa Cruz County Code Titles 7, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 18.

The LCP scope is described in County Code Chapter 18.60

Chapter 3: Access + Mobility Element, pp. 3-28, Policy “AM-1.1.10”

AM-1.1.10 Demonstrate County Leadership in Greenhouse Gas Reduction Policies.

Implement recommendations in the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and transportation demand management best practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the County vehicle fleet and from employee travel.

Chapter 5: Agriculture, Natural Resources + Conservation Element, pp. 5-4, Section Title “Relationship to Other Plans + Regulations”

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS + REGULATIONS

This chapter of the General Plan/Local Coastal Program (GP/LCP) combines two required elements: Conservation and Open Space. The chapter also includes Agriculture as an optional component of the Open Space Element. The conservation and management of agricultural land, natural and cultural resources, and open space are interrelated: natural resource areas and agricultural land, along with parks addressed in Chapter 7: Parks, Recreation + Public Facilities, comprise most of the open space in the County. Therefore, policies for the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and agricultural land are essential to the conservation of open space, and policies protecting open space also reinforce the protection of natural resources.

This element also implements California Coastal Act regulations pertaining to the management of coastal resources, including marine resources, environmentally sensitive habitat areas, coastal waters, agricultural land, and scenic and visual resources. Policies that are part of the LCP are identified with the letters “LCP.”

The policy framework provided in this element of the General Plan/LCP for the conservation and sustainable management of agricultural land, natural and cultural resources, and open space is implemented primarily through the Santa Cruz County Code (SCCC). Title 16, Environmental and Resource Protection, provides a comprehensive set of regulations protecting natural and cultural resources. The preservation of agricultural land and support for the local agricultural economy is also addressed comprehensively in the Zoning Ordinance and in the Agricultural Land Preservation and Protection Ordinance. Open space is also protected through the Zoning Ordinance. The Rural Density Matrix of the SCCC implements policies in this element that limit development density and subdivisions to protect open space and natural resources. The countywide Geographic Information System (GIS) identifies known locations of resources, constraints, and land use designations addressed in this chapter (see Appendix F: Natural Resource and Environmental Hazard Areas: Maps and Development Constraints). The official adopted General Plan/LCP maps are the most current versions residing in the County’s GIS system. The Agriculture, Natural Resources + Conservation Element policies and implementation strategies are also coordinated with other County plans. This element implements objectives of the County’s Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) to increase energy efficiency and strategies for natural systems and agriculture that foster adaption to climate change. The element also furthers the County Strategic Plan and vision for a sustainable environment, with policies and strategies to protect and restore natural resources, forests, coastlines, and agricultural land. Strategic Plan objectives to protect water quality and sustainably manage water resources, and promote renewable energy are also supported by policies of this element.

Implementation of the policies in the Agriculture, Natural Resources + Conservation Element requires close coordination and cooperation with local, state, and federal agencies, including local water and sewage disposal agencies, the Resource Conservation District, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the California Coastal Commission, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the California Department of Forestry. Details are provided in the policies and implementation strategies.

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County Counsel
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