

COUNTY OF PLUMAS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

DATE: May 15, 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

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

Absent: None

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A. Items to be continued or withdrawn from the agenda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 April 17, 2025 (Note: the regular meeting of May 1, 2025, was cancelled)

Motion: Approval of the Meeting Minutes of April 17, 2025

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

Vote: Motion carried.

Yes: Lewis, Montgomery, Spencer, West

VI. 2021 WILDFIRES LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLAN STANDING UPDATE

Planning Director Tracey Ferguson discussed the topic of the Plumas County PG&E Dixie Fire settlement funds totaling \$7.8 million. She stated the Board of Supervisors received numerous public comments requesting the majority of funds be spent in the communities most impacted by the 2021 wildfires. She informed Commissioners that the Board of Supervisors had passed and adopted Resolution 25-9015 on May 6, 2025, which established principles and priorities for the expenditure of the PG&E Dixie Fire settlement funds. Commissioner Harvey West inquired about the amount of remaining funds. Ferguson stated that funds approved by the Board of Supervisors thus far include \$10k on the feral cat program and \$440k to fund a limited term County Disaster Recovery Coordinator position for 3 years.

Commissioner Dayne Lewis asked what “non-county owned public infrastructure” referred to as referenced in Resolution 25-9015. Ferguson provided the example of aiding the Indian Valley Recreation & Parks District in developing a new green space in downtown Greenville. Commissioner Jack Montgomery asked if the remaining funds were accruing interest. Ferguson responded “yes.” Ferguson announced a Board of Supervisors special meeting in the form of a public workshop in Greenville on June 6, 2025, concerning wildfire recovery and discussion of the principles and priorities. Commissioner West asked about incoming building permits for residential home construction in wildfire recovery. Ferguson replied the County Building Department is working on an updated building permit count, although the last number she heard was approximately 60 total permit applications.

Ferguson updated the Planning Commission on the ‘Welcome Home Greenville’ initiative as part of the Plumas Housing Council discussions, stating private funds were utilized to purchase a modular three-bedroom, two-bathroom home for placement in Greenville. She announced the home is priced at \$275k and provides no return on investment to private donors. Ferguson informed the Commissioners construction on the home is set to begin in the coming weeks and will be completed this summer, within 90 days.

VII. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS’ REPORTS/COMMENTS

Commissioner Chris Spencer reported ongoing issues with Grey Wolves in District 1. Spencer stated that sixteen livestock have been killed by Grey Wolves in the past month in Sierra Valley. She stated the State’s guidelines regarding Grey Wolves and “eight breeding pairs” were unclear and ineffective in the ongoing issue within Plumas County. Spencer also announced that CareFlight had scheduled emergency response training for Monday, May 12, 2025, but the event was cancelled due to excessive wind.

Commissioner Dayne Lewis reportedly attended the Recreational Economy for Rural Communities (RERC) public workshop on May 13, 2025. He mentioned the goals of the grant were listed and discussed during the workshop. Lewis stated that Goal 5 of the RERC collaborative, Workforce Housing and Lodging, directly ties into the vacant land inventory evaluation being performed by the Planning Commission. Ferguson stated the grant brings capacity to rural communities. Ferguson announced the grant is funding a Community Coordinator position, which will be a part-time County employee. She stated the position is anticipated to be flown and recruited for starting in July 2025. Lewis stated the Plumas Association of Realtors is offering grants of up to \$5k to assist first-time homebuyers with home and fire insurance premiums. Lewis also stated a similar program for all homebuyers would be a good use of funds in fire-impacted areas like Greenville. Commissioner West mentioned such a program could be helpful if the 17% rate hikes proposed by State Farm are allowed. Commissioner Montgomery asked Lewis if residents along Quincy Junction Road near Oakland Camp attended the RERC workshop. Lewis responded that they had.

Commissioner West reiterated Commissioner Spencer’s concerns about Grey Wolves in Plumas County. He stated the issue is primarily affecting District 1 at present, but the issue will soon impact all districts.

VIII. 2024-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP #4

Ferguson reviewed the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) vacant and underutilized land inventory with the Commission. She informed the Commissioners that parcels continued to be reviewed by staff and more parcels need to be removed to narrow the list down more closer to the 154 unit RHNA. She reiterated the target is 206 units. Ferguson directed Commissioners to focus on the “very low” and “low” vacant and underutilized land lists at this meeting. She stated staff would research and remove parcels from the “moderate” and “above moderate” income lists. She stated the vacant lots chosen for the “moderate” and “above moderate” income categories were located primarily in Whitehawk, Plumas-Eureka Estates, Walker Ranch, and Grizzly Ranch.

Commissioner West asked what the income threshold for “Moderate” is. Commissioner Montgomery responded that the Area Median Income (AMI) was used to determine income brackets. Ferguson agreed and stated that “Moderate” is 80-120 AMI and above 120 AMI is “Above Moderate” income. Ferguson announced new income limits for 2025 had been released and stated she would present them at the next meeting. Commissioner West asked if the vacant lands in the City of Portola would be included in the Plumas County RHNA. Ferguson stated Portola’s RHNA is separate from the unincorporated area of Plumas County.

Ferguson reiterated the RHNA includes both vacant and underutilized parcels for each income bracket. She stated there are two (2) parcels in Quincy/East Quincy and two parcels in Greenville. She informed the Commission that the two parcels in Greenville are owned by the Plumas County Community Development Commission (PCCDC), they yield potentially four units and are vacant parcels. She stated the parcels in Greenville are located adjacent to existing subsidized housing. Ferguson stated staff will be contacting the PCCDC to assess the realistic capacity of the parcels. She stated the PCCDC is currently examining their owned properties and evaluating if any can be added into the vacant lands inventory. Ferguson stated the Plumas Housing Council is in discussions with the PCCDC to bring subsidized housing to the County. Ferguson summarized state Housing and Community Development’s (HCD) requirements for rural Plumas County to yield a minimum of ten (10) housing units per acre in higher density housing developments. She stated Plumas County is currently at 21.8 units per acre in maximum density housing developments in the “M-R” Multiple-Family Residential zoning. She stated some parcels may not meet the state minimum of ten (10) units per acre and those cases will require explanation to the state. She described density constraints as topography, environmental considerations, or factors that reduce the overall developable acreage.

Commissioner Montgomery asked how this relates to the Peppard Flat parcel. Ferguson explained the parcel is 7.47 acres. Commissioner Lewis stated he had visited the parcel. Lewis stated the majority of the Peppard Flat site is mountainside. Ferguson described the site constraints as topography as well as the parcel being heavily forested. Ferguson discussed citing site constraints to reduce parcel acreage to determine the realistic density of the parcel. County Counsel Sara James asked if the Rural Communities Housing Development Corporation (RCHDC) or Plumas County Behavioral Health (PCBH) had inquired about developable parcels. Ferguson stated there was not presently a viable parcel for PCBH’s permanent supportive housing initiative. She stated PCBH was in possession of a parcel inventory list based on specific criteria including access to amenities and distance from specific service providers.

Ferguson then discussed a parcel on Claremont Way. She stated the parcel would require a two-story development. Lewis stated two property owners had presented interest in selling parcels to developers interested in building multi-family residential housing.

Lewis stated he was in contact with the owner of a parcel near Cemetery Hill on the south side of the highway that may be suitable for development due to location and access to services. Lewis stated the parcel may have site constraints due to the sloped topography of the parcel and is zoned for commercial and residential. Ferguson stated it would be possible to include a program to rezone parcels to multi-family residential as part of the Housing Element review. She encouraged the Commissioners to consider the viability of a re-zoning program. Lewis stated it would be beneficial to know what is and is not developable based on parcel viability. He stated there was value in maintaining commercially zoned parcels in addition to adding multi-family residential zoned parcels.

Ferguson stated fifty (50) units is the target for the “very low” income category in the RHNA. She stated staff will evaluate the parcels and present the most viable properties. Ferguson stated thirty-two (32) parcels is the target for the “low” income RHNA. She referenced a parcel on Jackson Street with a proposed two-story development. Spencer pointed out the RHNA listed the parcel has having “soils/Geotech” site constraints. Ferguson stated that the development may require an innovative foundation to support a multi-level structure on the parcel. She stated an engineer was currently assigned to determine a viable path forward. Ferguson stated there were two vacant lands in Chester. Commissioner Montgomery stated the property owner is likely to submit a permit for a mobile home/RV development with forty (40) units. He stated he was uncertain how that would qualify according to state requirements. Ferguson stated the current zoning of Recreational Open Space and Multiple-Family Residential would not permit an RV park. She stated the property owner should confer with the Planning Department. Regarding another property, Montgomery stated the parcel owner was interested in developing “upscale” townhomes rather than low-income housing.

Spencer asked if the mobile-home expansion in Vinton would qualify as additional housing units in the RHNA. Ferguson confirmed that the project, consisting of fifty (50) units, should be included. West asked where the project was in the process. Associate Planner Marco Velazquez reported the property owners were obtaining a special use permit amendment through the Planning Department to facilitate the park expansion. Ferguson discussed conversing with HCD staff on how to determine “very low” versus “low” income bracket parcels. Lewis asked if RVs would be counted as housing in the RHNA. Ferguson confirmed mobile homes in a state-licensed mobile home park will be counted. Lewis asked if the expansion in Vinton was adding mobile homes or RV spaces. Ferguson confirmed the property was adding mobile homes. Ferguson stated non-viable properties would be removed from the vacant lands list.

Ferguson reviewed two parcels owned by Indian Valley Community Services District (IVCSD) for which there were plans for development. She stated the IVCSD Board is currently discussing whether to develop housing assets. Lewis asked what the intention of obtaining the parcels was. Ferguson stated the intention was to build housing. Montgomery asked if the housing being considered was part of the RRA Plumas County Council initiative. Ferguson confirmed it would be a part of the Plumas Housing Council initiative.

Senior Planner Tim Evans stated the mobile home expansion in Vinton was originally excluded from the list because it required a discretionary action. Ferguson asked if HCD had a rule prohibiting such properties from being included. Evans stated the Planning Department had previously discussed not including properties that required a Planned Development Permit or any discretionary actions. Ferguson stated rezoning a parcel is also considered an entitlement action. Ferguson stated she would also ask HCD about discretionary actions. Ferguson discussed listing projects in need of discretionary actions separately from the RHNA. She stated each parcel would be accompanied by an appendix, a photograph, and a narrative. Spencer commented that the list should be included as it demonstrates the ability of Plumas County to strategize layered solutions. Lewis agreed the additional list of alternatives would be proactive.

Ferguson reviewed previous edits made to the Housing Element 7th Cycle goals, policies, and actions/programs, including edits made to the Housing Trust Fund Program, Inclusionary Housing Program, and the inclusion of the Plumas Housing Council as a responsible party. Ferguson asked the Commissioners to decide on whether to include the Inclusionary Housing Program and potential metrics. Lewis recommended maintaining a high threshold to trigger the program so as not to dissuade developers. He recommended a threshold of 100 units. Ferguson explained the policy dictates an analysis be conducted prior to adopting an Inclusionary Housing Program to mitigate potential negative impacts. Lewis inquired if the program was asking whether or not to create an Inclusionary Housing Program. Ferguson responded yes, the process of creating an inclusionary housing ordinance would require a feasibility study. She presented the Commission with the options to eliminate the policy completely or to maintain the policy with feasibility study requirement.

Lewis asked if the program would not be addressed until an interested developer presents. Ferguson stated the analysis would be done prior, and the ordinance would be written with the agreed upon requirements. Montgomery asked if the threshold would be established case by case. Ferguson stated the threshold with a required percentage of affordable units would be written into an ordinance following an analysis. She mentioned the possibility of developers increasing prices on standard units to

compensate for financial loss on affordable units. Montgomery asked how to establish incentives to prevent that outcome. Ferguson included the Board of Supervisors could act on, for example, an incentive of zero property tax for one year. She stated part of the analysis would yield information on County-controlled incentives for development and developers. Montgomery asked if the Inclusionary Housing Program was required. Ferguson replied that she did not believe so but would inquire with HCD.

Spencer provided the example of Truckee, stating the lack of strategic housing development resulted in limited housing for the local workforce. Montgomery stated the current language was vague enough to allow for future planning without imposing strict metrics. Lewis concurred. Ferguson stated the end goal would be to generate revenue in a housing trust fund for construction of affordable housing. She stated developers also could have the option to pay into the fund in lieu of creating affordable housing units. Montgomery asked if a local organization like Chico's Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP) would be the intermediary responsible for facilitation. He questioned how detailed the Planning Commission needed to be in developing this policy at present.

Spencer asked what the downside is to leave the policy in. Ferguson informed the Commission that the state is wary of housing elements that turn over the same policies without action. She explained that reports on policy actions are sent to the state, and prior cycles show nothing has been done with the Inclusionary Housing Program. Spencer stated the program was important, but the demonstrated indecision through two housing element cycles may be ill advised. Lewis agreed. He stated a project has not come about that would trigger this policy. He recommended removing the Inclusionary Housing Program. Spencer agreed. Montgomery agreed, stating there are no projects in the near future relevant to this policy. Lewis agreed with Spencer's anecdote about Truckee. Montgomery stated the issue in Truckee is being driven by high end development, which is not necessarily occurring in Plumas County. Lewis stated it could be a possibility but is unlikely to occur at the same level. The Inclusionary Housing Program was recommended to be removed by the Commissioners. Ferguson stated the Affordable Housing Trust Fund ties directly into the Inclusionary Housing Program and would be removed. Spencer asked how the Plumas Housing Council ties into the development of the Housing Element 7th Cycle. Ferguson stated the Plumas Housing Council is evaluating several different housing strategies. Ferguson recommended adding a program recognizing the efforts of Plumas Housing Council.

Ferguson reviewed Policy 4 – Development Review and Processing Procedures and stated the fee schedules needed to be reviewed annually. She stated the Building and Planning departments are currently working to transition to Cloudpermit, an online permit submittal and management platform, to increase accessibility to the community. Ferguson Reviewed Policy 5 – Building, Planning, and Zoning Codes. She stated that Titles 8 and 9 of the Plumas County Code would be subject to review to ensure compliance. Ferguson brought up the previous discussion of extending the allowed camping time of 120 days to 180 days. Montgomery asked if “non-structural” should be removed in reference to tiny homes because they are considered RVs by the County. Ferguson clarified that “non-structural temporary shelters” are tents. She discussed the potential of developing a new ordinance to allow tiny homes on wheels as dwelling units. Montgomery recommended designing an ordinance specifically for tiny homes on wheels as temporary shelters separate from RVs to alleviate confusion. Ferguson stated the definition of “camping” could be amended to include tiny homes on wheels. She referenced similar ordinances in Placer County, where tiny homes on wheels can be considered permanent residences, provided they meet structural and health and safety requirements. Lewis stated that tiny homes on wheels coming from a manufacturer would be subject to Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) regulations that could be written into an ordinance. Ferguson referenced Appendix Q of the building code that is specific to tiny homes on a permanent foundation. James stated that, as written, tiny homes on wheels are considered RVs in Plumas County and a specific exemption would need to be written for them to be considered anything else.

Ferguson brought up the possibility of Planning Commission special meetings to workshop the Housing Element to meet the deadline of June 27, 2025, for the public review draft release. She stated scheduled meetings are June 5, 2025 and June 19, 2025. She asked if commissioners had any conflicts with upcoming special meetings. Spencer, Lewis, and Montgomery confirmed they would be present. Spencer asked what needed to be accomplished in the two meetings prior to the release. Ferguson stated the Goals, Policies, and Actions needed to be finalized. Lewis stated the June 5, 2025, meeting would

potentially be busy with opportunities for public comment on the Staniger Zone Change. James presented the idea of extending the time of scheduled meetings in lieu of adding special meetings. Spencer, Montgomery, and Lewis agreed to extend the time of scheduled meetings with a recess. Ferguson encouraged the commissioners to read through all programs to understand which need further consideration.

IX. REVIEW OF 2035 GENERAL PLAN

- A. Agriculture & Forestry Element Introduction, Setting/Existing Condition, Agriculture Resources, Forest Resources, Values and Issues, Legal Basis and Requirements, Relationship to Other Elements, and Plans and Planning

Ferguson discussed the Agriculture & Forestry Element, stating it is a proactive element of the General Plan due to the County's prevalence of agriculture and forestry and is not required by the state. She read through the Introduction statement. She stated the intention of this element is to protect and promote the sustainable use of agriculture and forest resources to balance economic development and sustainability. Lewis expressed appreciation for the statement "fundamental component of the rural character, historic use, and way of life" in reference to agriculture from the introductory statement. Lewis recommended adding a section on predator reintroduction to this Element. Montgomery asked if the concept of transitional zoning between agriculture, forested lands, and development needed to be included as a statement or if it was inherent in listed values and issues. He stated he believed there will be growing concerns of individuals moving near agricultural lands who may not be familiar with historic practices.

X. INFORMATION ITEMS/ON-GOING PROJECT UPDATES

- A. Staniger Zone Change (ZC 9-23/24-10)

Ferguson informed the Commissioners that the Staniger Zone Change is being noticed for the June 5, 2025, Planning Commission meeting. She informed the Commissioners that a new state law effective January 1, 2025, requires a 20-day notice before a planning commission holds a public hearing on an ordinance affecting the permitted uses of real property. She stated she and the Board of Supervisors became aware of this law on April 18, 2025, and determined it necessary to re-notice the public to ensure compliance. Lewis asked if the previous law required 10 days. Ferguson stated it was 10 days, and the 10-day requirement still stands for other notices not concerning an ordinance affecting the permitted uses of real property.

- B. The Office of the State Fire Marshall has recommended new levels of Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs) within Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) affecting unincorporated Plumas County in the Town of Chester, Town of Quincy, Town of East Quincy, and Sierra Valley. Prior to adopting an ordinance that designates 2025 LRA Moderate, High, and Very High FHSZs map, information is available for public review and comment on the Plumas County Planning Department website under "LRA Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) Map." <https://www.plumascounty.us/3354/LRA-Fire-Hazard-Severity-Zones-FHSZ-Map>. County Board of Supervisor public hearings will be held on June 3, 2025, and June 10, 2025, at 11AM (time certain) in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 520 Main Street, Room 308, Quincy to receive public comment in person, virtually by live streaming, or by phone.

Ferguson asked Commissioners to follow the link provided in the meeting agenda on Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) affecting the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) in the unincorporated areas of Plumas County, including Chester, Quincy, East Quincy, and Sierra Valley. She stated public hearings will be held during the Board of Supervisors meetings at 11AM on June 3, 2025, and June 10, 2025. She stated she is currently developing the ordinance based on a template from the Office of the State Fire Marshall. She informed the Commission that the state will allow counties to be more restrictive in categorizing FHSZs, but they cannot be less restrictive. She stated staff has been in communication with the Beckwourth Peak Fire Protection District, Peninsula Fire Protection District, and Quincy Fire Protection District as they would be responsible for responding to wildland fire in the LRA.

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. *2024-2029 Housing Element Update Public Workshop #5*
2. *Staniger Zone Change returning to the Planning Commission on June 5, 2025*
3. *Updates on Local Responsibility Areas and Fire Hazard Severity Zones*
4. *Discussion of Agriculture and Forestry Element of the 2035 Plumas County General Plan*
5. *Brown Act Training for Planning Commissioners*
6. *Draft a Planning Commission resolution to the Board of Supervisors recommending to officially recognize the Plumas Housing Council*

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Adjourn to the regular meeting scheduled on June 5, 2025.

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

Vote: ***Motion carried.***

Yes: Montgomery, Spencer, Lewis

Absent: Harvey West