



# PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

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**TO:** Planning Commission

**DATE:** May 13, 2026

**DEPARTMENT:** Community Development

**PREPARED BY:** Marie Jones Consulting (MJC)

**PRESENTER:** Marie Jones

**AGENDA TITLE:** Hold a Public Hearing, Receive Report and Adopt a Resolution of the Fort Bragg Planning Commission Recommending that City Council Adopt an Economic Development Focused Zoning Amendment to: 1) Allow More Uses in More Zoning Districts to Facilitate Economic Development; 2) Clarify the Limited Term Permit Process; 3) Make Minor Modifications to the Minor Use Permit Process; and 4) Revise Non-Conforming Structure and Non-Conforming Use Requirements.

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## RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adopt a Resolution of the Fort Bragg Planning Commission Recommending that City Council Adopt an Economic Development Focused Zoning Amendment to: 1) Allow More Uses in More Zoning Districts to Facilitate Economic Development; 2) Clarify the Limited Term Permit Process; 3) Make Minor Modifications to the Minor Use Permit Process; and 4) Revise Non-Conforming Structure and Non-Conforming Use Requirements.

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## BACKGROUND

On August 19, 2025, the City Council received a report which identified six potential strategies to remove potential barriers to economic growth in Fort Bragg. These regulatory changes could help make Fort Bragg easier for businesses to start, grow and expand.

1. Revise the Land Use Tables to allow more business types in more zoning districts.
2. Allow Small Startups (less than 500 SF) in more locations.
3. Revise the Limited Term Permit Process.
4. Consider modifying the Minor Use Process to make it a truly administrative permit.
5. Modify non-conforming use regulations to make it easier for existing businesses to expand.

Each of these policy options along with the underlying issue and possible regulatory solutions was explored in detail. The City Council gave the green light for City staff and consultants to make the proposed regulatory changes and bring them forward to Planning Commission for a recommendation.

- Items 2 and 3 were referred to the Community Development Committee on October 6, 2025 for further discussion and consideration.

AGENDA ITEM NO. XX

- The Community Development Committee provided direction to hold off on implementation of item #2 – “Allow Small Startups (less than 500 SF) in more locations.”
- For Item 3, MJC met with the eight-member Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) regarding proposed changes to the Limited Term Permit process. Recommendations from that meeting were brought forward to the Community Development Committee which accepted the recommendations. The proposed ordinance includes revisions to Limited Term Permit regulations to reflect the input provided by both the Technical Advisory Committee and the Community Development Committee.

Additionally, in 2017, the City updated the Inland Land Use and Development code to allow more uses in more zoning districts at that time. Those changes have not yet been implemented in the Coastal Land Use and Development Code. Therefore, many more changes are proposed to the CLUDC to increase flexibility in those zoning districts. However, as Highway Commercial zoning is intended for visitor serving uses (a Coastal Act priority use), fewer changes are proposed for this zone.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Update the Land Use Tables**

Currently, some businesses cannot find appropriate vacant space in the zoning districts where they are permitted, and conversely some businesses find their preferred building in a zone where they are not permitted.

*Tensions for consideration:*

- Introducing potentially incompatible uses into the same area can lead to conflicts between property owners and/or business operators.
- Industrially zoned land generally has a low value, partly because other uses cannot occupy it. To the degree that the City allows other uses in the industrial zoning district, this land will no longer be available for industrial businesses, which have no alternative places to go. Care should be exercised to preserve industrially zoned land for industrial uses.

The City Council and Planning Commission both recommended that the Land Use Tables be revised to allow more business types in more zoning districts. This policy direction has been implemented in the attached ordinances.

This regulatory change would allow business owners who are seeking to open a new business (or expand an existing business) access to a wider array of locations (zoning districts). The attached Land Use Tables include more diversity of business uses in different zoning districts.

**Proposed Changes to the ILUDC.** For the ILUDC, potential revisions include the following key changes:

1. Minor changes to all commercial zoning districts including: spelling out Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), deletion of the category Single Residential Unit as it is duplicative of Single-family residential unit, combine duplicative health and fitness categories into just two categories “recreational facility indoor” and “outdoor”., delete footnote reference #4 for Cannabis uses as this footnote is not included in the zoning code.
2. Allow more uses in more commercial zoning districts, where they will not cause conflicts or environmental impacts, as follows:
  - **Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District:**
    - Use Permit Required- Cottage Food Preparation with a Use Permit.
    - Permitted by right - Live/Work, Single-Family Residential, Restaurant/café, and Child day care center.
    - Minor Use Permit for Artisan shop instead of Use Permit
  - **Commercial Office Zoning District**
    - Use Permit Required - R&D, Indoor Commercial Recreation Facility, Grocery (specialty Retail), and Vehicle Storage.
    - Permitted by right - Printing and Publishing, Art Studio, Artisan Shop, Child day care center.
  - **Central Business District:**
    - Minor Use Permit - Bed and Breakfast Inn.
    - Allow residential uses in the Central Business district on the back half of a commercial property, in addition to allowing them on the upper floors of a commercial property.
  - **General Commercial.**
    - Permitted by Right - Bed and breakfast Inn.
    - Use Permit - Bar/tavern, Brewery/restaurant, and Contractors base (permitting only within a structure)
  - **Highway Commercial.**
    - Use Permit – Brewery Restaurant, Bar Tavern, Contractors Base, (currently only allowable in Industrial zones), Cottage Food Preparation.
    - Permitted by Right – Printing & publishing, Indoor building and landscaping sales, Furniture store, Doctors’ office, Medical clinic, Adult day care, Personal services, Child day care center.
3. Simplify the required Use Permit findings for commercial projects.
4. The ordinance includes limited proposed changes to the Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial zoning districts as follows:
  - **Light Industrial:** Permitted by Right - Caretakers quarters, Accessory retail.
  - **Heavy Industrial:** Permitted by Right - Caretakers quarters, Accessory retail or services, Fuel dealers and Business support services.

The attached ordinances (Attachments 1 & 2) include revised Land Use Tables and regulatory language for both the ILUDC and the CLUDC. The entirety of both Land Use Tables have been included in the ordinances to provide the City Council, Planning Commission, and the public an overview of all permissible uses and to allow easier comparison about what is allowed and what is not allowed in each zoning district.

**Proposed Changes to the CLUDC.** Proposed Changes to CLUDC include all the proposed changes to the ILUDC as well as the following:

1. The CLUDC Use Tables have been updated to match changes which were made to the ILUDC Use Tables at various times in the past (2017, 2019, 2022, 2024, 2025). Most of these changes have been migrated over to the CLUDC except for retaining the relatively limited number of uses that are permissible in the Highway Commercial district, which the Coastal Commission reserves primarily for visitor serving uses.
2. The CLUDC amendment also includes two ordinances which were adopted in the past for the ILUDC (Cannabis and Formula Businesses). These new CLUDC ordinances will be addressed as part of a larger ordinance update to the CLUDC.

### **Limited Term Permits**

Limited Term Permits require significant staff time to process, and some community organizations and events have trouble applying for their permit on time, which causes pressure for coordinating agencies and the non-profit. Some events have been cancelled because they did not apply for a Limited Term Permit in time and/or obtain the required insurance.

*Issues for consideration:*

- The coordinated multi-department review often identifies safety/operational/public health issues that should be addressed in the event location/operations. This review thereby reduces risks associated with events and other activities. The event organizers change from year to year for events and so the Limited Term Permit process is an opportunity for the City to educate the event operator about their responsibilities.
- Most event operators need to get an encroachment permit even if they do not get a Limited Term permit. The encroachment permit includes insurance requirements to protect the City against claims for liabilities associated with an event. The Lack of insurance coverage results in event delay or cancelation.

*Policy Option 3. Revise the Limited Term Permit Process.*

Most community events require Limited Term Permits, and Community Development Department (CDD) staff process between 30 and 50 Limited Term Permits per year. Limited Term Permits allow short term activities in zoning districts where they are not typically permitted. Depending on the scale and type of event, a Limited Term Permit involves multiple departments (Community Development, Public Works, Police Department, Fire Department, Caltrans and Mendocino County's Building Department & Environmental Health). However, not all events require review by all departments. The Limited Term Permit process also allows the City to require insurance where events will occur on City property or on the City right-of-way. Activities that are currently reviewed/approved through the Limited Term Permit process include parades, fairs, carnivals, first Fridays, farmers market, concerts, festivals, beer gardens, construction yards, temporary structures, etc. The purpose of the Limited Term Permit is to: 1) identify specific issues for the event or activity and address them through special conditions and coordination with other departments; and 2) obtain an insurance endorsement to protect the City.

The City could potentially revise the Limited Term Permit process in one or more of the following ways:

- Establish a 5-year Limited Term Permit.
- Simplify the Limited Term Permit process for smaller events.
- Make some temporary activities permitted by right.

The City Council referred this item to the Community Development Committee for further discussion. Prior to the CDC meeting these ideas were vetted with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC provided the following recommendations to the CDC.

1. The TAC opposes granting Limited Term Permits for more than 1 year for the following reasons:
  - a. Events often change and the LTP process provides an opportunity for Staff to include additional conditions for events that change with time.
  - b. There are relatively few events (4 of 49 events) that are sufficiently well organized that TAC would feel comfortable granting a three-year LTP permit. However, even granting these few organizations a 3-year LTP may create resentment by other event organizers who might push for a longer-term permit, even though it would not be warranted.
  - c. The same events are often run by different people from year to year. The LTP process informs new event organizers of their responsibilities and the required special conditions for their event. This makes all events run more smoothly, safely and it reduces event related issues for City departments.
  - d. Limited Term Permits are required each year to communicate the timing, location and make-up of the event so that all City staff are aware of the event and fulfill any individual required roles.

2. The TAC supported the idea of offering an “over the counter” LTP in limited cases that would include:
  - a. Criteria for an “over the counter” LTP
  - b. A checklist of standard special conditions for simple events that will be reviewed by a CDD staff person with the applicant at the counter.
3. The TAC did not support the idea of approving small events in the CBD without a LTP. Instead, TAC supported the idea of implementing existing policies that exempt small events of less than 30 people from LTPs in the City parks (birthdays, picnics, small weddings). Staff implemented this and at least one event has been exempted under the policy thus far this year.

The TAC also generated the following ideas to make the current TAC process more efficient, some of which have already been implemented as noted below.

1. Institute an “expedited event” fee for event organizers who don’t complete all their event related paperwork at least 30 days in advance of the event. This would cover extra City time required to process an LTP quickly and would motivate event organizers to submit their event applications on time. Staff recommends an expedited permit fee of \$50, that would not be eligible for the new fee waiver program.
2. CDD staff will send out a reminder (email or call) to all ongoing events three months prior to the event date (of the previous year), so that event organizers are reminded of the need to apply for the LTP. This was implemented successfully this year.
3. Clarify that informal private events of less than 30 people in a City Park do not require an LTP per Administrative Regulation S-4. This has been implemented.
4. A member of the Administration department should be part of TAC so that all insurance requirements are effectively implemented. This has been implemented.
5. The Police Department and Public Works are especially impacted by large events and parades. City Council should establish criteria for when event-related staff time (much of which is overtime to set up, break down, and police the event) is charged to an event organizer or paid for by the City’s General Fund. Tac recommends that
  - a. For-profit events should cover all City staff time (e.g. Carnival).
  - b. For non-profit events, the City Council could set a cap on General Fund supported staff time of \$500/event and the City could charge each event for any staff time over and above \$500. (Paul-Bunyan Days, Land Trust Marathon, etc.)
6. CDD will establish an “events calendar” which it will share with all members of the TAC so that everyone can look ahead to see what events are anticipated. The events calendar has been established and is in use.

The Community Development Committee, and the Planning Commission agreed with the TAC’s recommendations and the attached ordinances reflect these changes.

**Minor Use Permit Process.** The Minor Use Permit process is cumbersome and time-consuming for staff with relatively little value added in community process.

- Minor Use Permits take significant staff time, because staff currently prepare a staff report and use a two-stage noticing process (of neighbors and, if appealed, the general public).
- These permits are typically appealed by non-neighbors. They are rarely appealed by neighbors.
- If appealed, the permit requires publication of a notice in the paper and a hearing with the Community Development Director. Permits are also appealable to the Planning Commission, though this rarely happens.

The proposed ordinance modifies the Minor Use Process to make it a truly administrative permit with revised noticing requirements, a checklist for approval (no staff report required) and the ability for staff to refer the project to the Planning Commission if necessary. Both the City Council and the Planning Commission considered and concurred with this approach at previous meetings.

**Non-Conforming Structures, Lots and Uses.** Currently some existing, long-term businesses have buildings that don't conform to setbacks or other land use requirements or are located in areas where they are no longer permitted. Currently these businesses cannot expand their existing non-conforming structures and/or their business within their existing parcel.

*Both the City Council and the Planning Commission have discussed this issue at regularly scheduled meetings and the attached recommended changes to the zoning code reflects previous input.*

Proposed changes to Commercial non-conforming structures and uses include:

- Allow non-conforming businesses (located in a zoning district where they are no longer allowed) to expand both within a structure and throughout a parcel, if: 1) they are not a nuisance and have received no code violation letters or calls for service in three years; 2) they get Use Permit approval; and 3) any new buildings comply with development standards (height, setbacks, etc.).
- Allow any business to increase the size of a non-conforming commercial structure by 500 SF or up to 25% of the existing structures' area with Use Permit approval.
- Allow the reconstruction of a non-conforming structure in the same footprint.

Proposed changes to residential non-conforming structures and uses include:

- Allow an increase in the size of a non-conforming residential structure with Use Permit approval.
- Allow existing nonconforming residential structures (e.g. not allowed in a zoning district) to be rehabilitated/renovated. Currently the code includes outdated cost thresholds for rehabilitation.

- Eliminate limits on the conversion of residential accessory structures to Accessory Dwelling Units, as these limits are no longer permissible under state law. This language was inadvertently left in the code.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE**

The estimated \$12,000 in costs associated with these regulatory changes would be borne by the General Plan Maintenance Fund. These funds would be used to publish hearing notices and for staff and consultant time.

Implementing these regulatory changes might reduce the workload of Community Development Department staff. If it does, it would free up staff time to engage in other activities such as code enforcement, special project management, economic development, community outreach, community events, and/or other activities as defined by the City Manager/City Council.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

Please see the attached EIR addendum for compliance of the proposed ILUDC changes with CEQA.

The preparation of and adoption of the CLUDC ordinance is exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines § 15265 (c), and pursuant to the California Coastal Act are statutorily exempt from compliance with CEQA. This statutory exemption “shifts the burden of CEQA compliance from the local agency to the California Coastal Commission.”

### **STRATEGIC PLAN/COUNCIL PRIORITIES:**

These proposed zoning amendments implement and are aligned with the following key priorities from Goal 1A of the Strategic Plan:

1. Cultivate a diverse business climate that **welcomes innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment...**

The zoning amendments allow for a more diverse economy and it welcomes innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment as it allows more uses in more zoning districts which makes it easier to open a new business and invest in our community.

2. Foster a business-friendly environment that **simplifies the regulatory process...**

The zoning amendments simplify the regulatory process by making some uses permissible by right rather than requiring a Use Permit or a Minor Use Permit. The zoning amendment also simplifies the Minor Use Permit process for both staff and the applicant.

3. Revitalize Fort Bragg consistent with the character of the community by **supporting existing businesses** and **attracting a variety of local business ownership**, supporting buyer empowerment, and creating employment opportunities to encourage spending within our local economy.

The proposed amendment supports existing businesses by allowing those long-term businesses that are legal non-conforming uses (e.g. were established before the Land Use Code and Zoning Map were adopted) to expand with use permit approval. The amendment supports local business ownership through the extension of the franchise business regulations to the Coastal Zone.

4. ***Uphold land use and environmental policies that encourage orderly and efficient development...***

The proposed amendments are compatible with existing land use and environmental policies that encourage efficient development.

#### **INLAND GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS:**

**Use Tables.** The proposed amendments are consistent with the relevant General Plan policies as outlined below. General Plan Policy language is noted with *italic text*.

***Policy LU-1.1 Implementation of the Land Use Designations Map:*** *Implement the Land Use Designations Map by approving development and conservation projects consistent with the land use designations, and ensure consistency between the Inland General Plan and the Inland Land Use and Development Code.*

***Central Business District (CBD).*** *This designation applies to the core of the downtown which is the civic, cultural, and commercial center of the community. Uses and site development patterns in the Central Business District are typically pedestrian-oriented. This designation is intended to accommodate government and professional offices, retail stores, theaters, and other similar uses. Residential uses on upper floors or on the ground floor at the rear of buildings are encouraged at a density of up to 40 units per net acre.*

*The proposed zoning code amendment allows a Bed and Breakfast Inn with a MUP instead of a UP. This is consistent with City Council's earlier decision to allow vacation rentals in the CBD.*

*The zoning code amendment would also allow residential uses in the Central Business District on the back half of a commercial property, in addition to allowing them on the upper floors of a commercial property. The General Plan allows residential uses at the rear of buildings and this change to the zoning ordinance implements that part of the zoning designation above.*

***Neighborhood Commercial (CN).*** *This designation provides small-scale, convenience shopping and services for surrounding residential neighborhoods.*

*Retail and service businesses such as grocery stores, laundromats, restaurants, beauty salons, and similar types of uses are allowed in this designation.*

The proposed change in the required findings for new uses in the CN district complies with this policy. The new finding is “The use is designed and intended to serve the local neighborhood.”

Uses that would be permitted by right would include: Live/Work, Single-Family Residential, Restaurant/café, and Child day care center. All of these use types would serve the local neighborhood and so would be in conformance with the purpose of the zoning district.

Additionally, Artisan shop would be allowable with a Minor Use Permit and Cottage Food Preparation would require a Use Permit. At the time of permitting, the Review Authority can determine if the proposed use fits in with the specific neighborhood where it is proposed.

***General Commercial (CG).*** *The General Commercial designation is intended for a less compact and intensive type of development than found in the Central Business District. Typical land uses in this designation depend more on vehicular than pedestrian access and include automotive and service-related outlets, retail sales, hardware, paint or carpeting sales, offices, apparel stores, and food stores. Shopping centers are allowed with approval of a conditional use permit. Residential uses are permitted above the ground floor or on the ground floor at the rear of buildings at a maximum density of up to 24 units per acre.*

The proposed changes to the required findings for use permit approval in the General Commercial zone eliminate additional findings for development within the General Commercial zoning district, as this zoning amendment expands uses within the zone beyond large format retail. This zone now allows many residential use types and commercial use types that don't require large format windows. The proposed and existing land uses conform with the General Plan designation above.

The proposed zoning code amendment only adds three new uses to the General Commercial designation, namely Bed and Breakfast Inn, Bar tavern, and Contractors' Base (within a structure only). These uses depend on vehicular traffic and are not likely to cause conflicts with the other uses in the district.

***Highway Visitor Commercial (CH).*** *This land use designation applies to land uses serving residents and visitors on sites which are located along Highway One and arterials at the entry points to the community. Typical uses allowed in this designation include motels and other lodging enterprises, restaurants, and retail outlets. Residential uses are permitted above the ground floor or on the ground floor at the rear of buildings at a maximum density of up to 24 units per acre.*

The proposed changes to the required findings for use permit approval in the Highway Visitor Commercial zone deemphasize visitor serving as the priority use and allows other uses that serve local clientele without also requiring a visitor serving use in the Inland zoning code. This change is compatible with the General

Plan definition for the use, as the General Plan definition does not require visitor serving uses over other uses. (Page 3 of Attachment 1)

The uses that would require a Use Permit (Brewery Restaurant, Bar Tavern, Contractors Base, and Cottage Food Preparation) are consistent with this General Plan Definition. Additionally, the uses that are already allowed but would be permitted by right (Printing & publishing, Indoor building and landscaping sales, Furniture store, Doctors' office, Medical clinic, Adult day care, Personal services) are also consistent with this definition.

**Office Commercial (CO).** *This designation is intended to serve the office and institutional needs of the community and permits such uses as professional offices, hospitals, medical clinics, and banks. Commercial uses supportive of the office and institutional uses, such as blueprint and copy shops, cafés and restaurants, pharmacies, and similar retail establishments are permitted. Residential uses are permitted at a maximum density of 24 units per acre with a conditional use permit.*

The zoning code changes will require a Use Permit for Research and Development, Indoor Commercial Recreation Facility, Grocery (specialty Retail), and Vehicle Storage. These uses are compatible with this zoning district. The zoning code amendment will allow the following uses by right - Printing and Publishing, Art Studio, Artisan Shop, Child day care center. These uses are also compatible with this zoning designation.

**Heavy Industrial (IH).** *This designation is intended for a range of heavy industrial uses including manufacturing, assembly and processing, and the storage and distribution of raw materials, aggregate plants, and related heavy industrial uses which are generally incompatible with and require locations removed from residential and visitor serving uses.*

The revisions to the zoning code would allow the following uses by right, instead of requiring a MUP,: caretakers quarters, accessory retail, fuel dealers and business support services. These uses are all incidental to heavy industrial and these uses are unlikely to have any impacts that necessitate even a MUP analysis.

**Light Industrial (IL)** *This designation is intended for a variety of commercial, manufacturing, wholesale and distribution, and industrial uses which do not generate a significant amount of on-site customer traffic or high levels of noise, dust, odors, or other potential off-site nuisance characteristics. Manufacturing uses are permitted provided they occur within an enclosed structure. Other uses permitted in this designation include offices ancillary to permitted uses, agricultural product sales and services, construction yards, and automobile repair shops.*

See above Heavy Industrial discussion for changes to Light Industrial section of zoning code.

*Policy LU-3.1 Central Business District: Retain and enhance the small-scale, pedestrian-friendly, and historic character of the Central Business District (CBD).*

The proposed changes to the CBD allowing residential on the back half of the ground floor and allowing Bed and Breakfasts is compatible with this policy.

*Policy LU-3.4 Encourage Infill Development: Encourage infill development of vacant and underdeveloped land in the Central Business District and adjacent commercial areas before amending the Inland General Plan and rezoning to obtain additional commercial land elsewhere.*

The proposed amendment encourages infill development by allowing more uses in more zoning districts.

*Policy LU-4.1 Formula Businesses and Big Box Retail: The location, scale, and appearance of formula businesses and big box retail shall not detract from the economic vitality of established commercial businesses, and shall be consistent with the small town, rural character of Fort Bragg.*

The proposed zoning amendments include regulations for formula businesses which is compatible with this policy.

*Policy LU-4.3 Standards for Commercial Uses in Residential Areas: Commercial uses in and adjacent to residential areas shall not adversely affect the primarily residential character of the area.*

Proposed changes to the use table would not result in new incompatible uses adjacent to residential areas.

*Policy LU-5.2 Industrial Land Use Standards: Require that industrial development avoid or minimize creating substantial pollution, noise, glare, dust, odor, or other significant adverse impacts.*

None of the proposed new uses for industrial zoning districts would result in substantial pollution, noise, glare, dust, odor, or other significant adverse impacts.

**Limited Term Permit.** The Inland General Plan does not have any policies related to temporary events.

**Minor Use Permit Process.** The Inland General Plan has no policies related to the Minor Use Permit process.

**Non-Conforming Uses.** The Inland General Plan has no policies related to non-conforming uses.

## **COASTAL GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS:**

**Land Use Tables.** The following analyzes the proposed Use Table changes with relevant policies of the Land Use Element of the Coastal General Plan. This analysis differs from the prior analysis in that more changes are proposed for the use tables in the Coastal Land Use and Development Code and the policy language of the Coastal General Plan includes additional policies for Coastal Act priority uses. Coastal General Plan Policy language is noted with italic text.

**Policy LU-1.1 Implementation of the Land Use Designations Map:** *Implement the Land Use Designations Map by approving development and conservation projects consistent with the land use designations, and ensure consistency between the Coastal General Plan and the Coastal Land Use and Development Code.*

**Central Business District (CBD).** *This designation applies to the core of the downtown which is the civic, cultural, and commercial center of the community. Uses and site development patterns in the Central Business District are typically pedestrian-oriented. This designation is intended to accommodate government and professional offices, retail stores, theaters, and other similar uses. Residential uses on upper floors or on the ground floor at the rear of buildings are encouraged at a density of up to 40 units per net acre.*

The proposed zoning code amendment allows the following new uses in the CBD:

- *Artisan/craft product manufacturing with retail sales*
- *Brewery/restaurant*
- *Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Single-family residential unit*
- *Cannabis retail and accessory cannabis uses*
- *Formula business*
- *General retail - 10,000 sf or larger*
- *Solar, wind, geothermal facilities for on-site use*

*These uses are compatible with the existing Central Business District and the CBD designation described above. The CBD already includes a large format general retail store, cannabis retail stores, ADUs, single family residential and a Brewery Restaurant.*

*The zoning code amendment would also allow residential uses in the Central Business district on the back half of a commercial property, in addition to allowing them on the upper floors of a commercial property. The General Plan allows residential uses at the rear of buildings and this change to the zoning ordinance implements that part of the zoning designation above.*

**Neighborhood Commercial (CN).** *This designation provides small-scale, convenience shopping and services for surrounding residential neighborhoods. Retail and service businesses such as grocery stores, laundromats, restaurants, beauty salons, and similar types of uses are allowed in this designation.*

The proposed change in the required findings for new uses in the CN district complies with this policy. The new finding is “The use is designed and intended to serve the local neighborhood.”

New uses would include:

- Studio - Art, dance, martial arts, music, etc.
- Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) (in specific circumstances).
- Single Family Home (in specific circumstances).
- Artisan Shop
- Cottage food preparation
- Solar, wind, geothermal facilities for on-site use

The code amendment also allows a Restaurant/café and a Child day care center by right instead of requiring a Use Permit

All of these use types would serve the local neighborhood and so would be in conformance with the purpose of the zoning district.

**General Commercial (CG).** *The General Commercial designation is intended for a less compact and intensive type of development than found in the Central Business District. Typical land uses in this designation depend more on vehicular than pedestrian access and include automotive and service-related outlets, retail sales, hardware, paint or carpeting sales, offices, apparel stores, and food stores. Shopping centers are allowed with approval of a conditional use permit. Residential uses are permitted above the ground floor or on the ground floor at the rear of buildings at a maximum density of up to 24 units per acre.*

The proposed zoning code amendment adds the following new uses to the General Commercial designation:

- Artisan/craft product manufacturing with retail sales
- Brewery/restaurant
- Research and development (R&D)
- Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) (in specific circumstances).
- Single Family Home (in specific circumstances).
- Cannabis retail and accessory cannabis uses
- Cannabis retail - Delivery only
- Formula business
- General retail - 10,000 sf or larger
- Contractors, base
- Cottage food preparation
- Solar, wind, geothermal facilities for on-site use

The zoning amendment also changes Bed and Breakfast Inn and personal services to permitted by right and a Bar/tavern to Use Permit required.

All these uses depend on vehicular traffic and none will cause conflicts with the other uses in the district.

**Highway Visitor Commercial (CH).** *This land use designation applies to land uses serving residents and visitors on sites which are located along Highway One and arterials at the entry points to the community. Typical uses allowed in this designation include motels and other lodging enterprises, restaurants, and retail outlets. Residential uses are permitted above the ground floor or on the ground floor at the rear of buildings at a maximum density of up to 24 units per acre.*

The proposed changes to the required findings for use permit approval in the Highway Visitor Commercial zone. This change is compatible with the General Plan definition for the zoning district, as the General Plan definition does not require visitor serving uses over other uses. (Page 3 of Attachment 2)

New uses that would be permissible in this zoning district include:

- Artisan/craft product manufacturing with retail sales
- Brewery/restaurant
- Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) (in specific circumstances).
- Cannabis retail and accessory cannabis uses
- Cannabis retail - Delivery only
- Formula business
- General retail - 10,000 sf or larger
- Cottage food preparation
- Solar, wind, geothermal facilities for on-site use

Personal services would change from a Use Permit required to permitted by right. Additionally, the Use Permit requirement for “multifamily dwelling” has been deleted because the more accurate Residential Component of a Mixed-Use Project is already in the table, and this allows multifamily to be developed with some visitor serving use on the site with a Use Permit, in compliance with the code and the definition.

All the above uses are consistent with the General Plan Definition because they are visitor serving and benefit from a highway 1 location.

**Office Commercial (CO).** *This designation is intended to serve the office and institutional needs of the community and permits such uses as professional offices, hospitals, medical clinics, and banks. Commercial uses supportive of the office and institutional uses, such as blueprint and copy shops, cafés and restaurants, pharmacies, and similar retail establishments are permitted. Residential uses are permitted at a maximum density of 24 units per acre with a conditional use permit.*

The zoning code changes will include the following new uses:

- Artisan/craft product manufacturing with retail sales

- Research and development (R&D)
- Commercial recreation facility – Indoor (Which already exists in this zoning district; this change would make The Bar (formerly Redwood Health Club) a conforming use.
- Theater
- Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) (in specific circumstances).
- Cannabis retail and accessory cannabis uses
- Formula business
- General retail - 10,000 sf or larger
- Groceries, specialty foods
- Mortuary, Funeral home
- Solar, wind, geothermal facilities for on-site use.

These uses are compatible with this zoning district.

The zoning code amendment will allow the following uses by right - Printing and Publishing, Art Studio, Artisan Shop, Child day care center. These uses are also compatible with this zoning designation.

***Heavy Industrial (IH).*** *This designation is intended for a range of heavy industrial uses including manufacturing, assembly and processing, and the storage and distribution of raw materials, aggregate plants, and related heavy industrial uses which are generally incompatible with and require locations removed from residential and visitor serving uses.*

The zoning code amendment would add the following uses to the Heavy Industrial Zoning District:

- Cannabis – Indoor cultivation (nursery and/or mature plants)
- Brewery/restaurant
- Research and development (R&D)
- Caretaker quarters
- Accessory cannabis – Retail, retail delivery
- Cannabis retail - Delivery only

The revisions to the zoning code would allow the following uses by right, instead of requiring a MUP: Accessory retail, Fuel dealers.

These uses are all incidental to heavy industrial and these uses are unlikely to have any impacts that necessitate even a MUP analysis.

***Light Industrial (IL)*** *This designation is intended for a variety of commercial, manufacturing, wholesale and distribution, and industrial uses which do not*

*generate a significant amount of on-site customer traffic or high levels of noise, dust, odors, or other potential off-site nuisance characteristics. Manufacturing uses are permitted provided they occur within an enclosed structure. Other uses permitted in this designation include offices ancillary to permitted uses, agricultural product sales and services, construction yards, and automobile repair shops.*

The zoning code amendment would add the following uses to the Light Industrial Zoning District:

- Cannabis – Indoor cultivation (nursery and/or mature plants)
- Brewery/restaurant
- Manufacturing/processing – Medium intensity
- Research and development Caretaker quarters
- Accessory cannabis – Retail, retail delivery
- Cannabis retail - Delivery only

The revisions to the zoning code would allow the following uses by right, instead of requiring a MUP: Accessory retail and Services and Building and landscape materials sales - Outdoor.

These uses are all incidental to light industrial and these uses are unlikely to have any impacts that necessitate even a MUP analysis.

*Policy LU-3.1 Central Business District: Retain and enhance the small-scale, pedestrian-friendly, and historic character of the Central Business District (CBD).*

The proposed changes to the CBD allowing residential on the back half of the ground floor and allowing Bed and Breakfasts is compatible with this policy.

*Policy LU-3.4 Encourage Infill Development: Encourage infill development of vacant and underdeveloped land in the Central Business District and adjacent commercial areas before amending the Inland General Plan and rezoning to obtain additional commercial land elsewhere.*

The proposed amendment encourages infill development by allowing more uses in more zoning districts.

*Policy LU-4.1 Formula Businesses and Big Box Retail: The location, scale, and appearance of formula businesses and big box retail shall not detract from the economic vitality of established commercial businesses, and shall be consistent with the small town, rural character of Fort Bragg.*

The proposed zoning amendments include regulations for formula businesses in the Coastal Zone.

*Policy LU-4.3 Standards for Commercial Uses in Residential Areas: Commercial uses in and adjacent to residential areas shall not adversely affect the primarily residential character of the area.*

Proposed changes to the use table would not result in new incompatible uses adjacent to residential area.

*Policy LU-5.2: Ensure that there are adequate sites for visitor-serving land uses by:*

- a) *Maintaining existing areas designated for Highway-Visitor Commercial uses;*
- b) *Maintaining the Highway Visitor Commercial land use designation as one allowing primarily recreational and visitor-serving uses; and*
- c) *Reserving adequate infrastructure capacity to accommodate existing, authorized, and probable visitor serving uses.*

The proposed zoning amendment does not change the zoning map so it maintains existing areas designated for visitor-serving land uses. The uses that are proposed to be added to the Visitor Serving use table all serve visitors. This zoning amendment does not impact the availability of infrastructure to serve visitor serving uses. Likewise, for the above reasons the proposed ordinance amendments implements Policy LU-5.6.

*Policy LU-7.5 Industrial Land Use Standards: Require that industrial development avoid or minimize creating substantial pollution, noise, glare, dust, odor, or other significant adverse impacts.*

None of the proposed new uses for industrial zoning districts would result in substantial pollution, noise, glare, dust, odor, or other significant adverse impacts.

**Limited Term Permit.** The Coastal General Plan does not have any policies related to temporary events.

**Minor Use Permit Process.** The Coastal General Plan has no policies related to the Minor Use Permit process.

**Non-Conforming Uses.** The Coastal General Plan has no policies related to non-conforming uses.

#### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH:**

These items were brought forward and discussed by the City Council (August 19, 2025), the Community Development Committee (October 6, 2025) and the Planning Commission (February 25, 2026).

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The Planning Commission can choose to undertake the following alternative actions:

1. Retain existing regulations.
2. Provide additional direction.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. AN ORDINANCE AMENDING DIVISION 18 OF THE FORT BRAGG MUNICIPAL CODE (ILUDC 1-26) TO:
  - i. Amend *Section 18.22.030 (C) Commercial Zoning Districts and Table 2.6; 18.24.030 Industrial Land Use Table 2-10; and Special Purpose Land Use Table 2-14 of Section 18.26.030* to Facilitate Economic Development by Allowing More Uses in More Zoning Districts; and
  - ii. Amend *Section 18.71.030 (F) (2) - Limited Term Permit - Events* to clarify the Limited Term Permit Process; and
  - iii. Amend *Section 18.71.060 E - Use Permit and Minor Use Permits* to Make Minor Modifications to the Minor Use Permit Process; and
  - iv. Amend *Section 17.90.030 - Restrictions on Nonconforming Structures and Uses Through 18.90.080 - Nonconforming Due to Lack of a Use Permit* to allow for easier reuse and expansion of non-conforming structures and uses.
2. AN ORDINANCE AMENDING DIVISION 17 OF THE FORT BRAGG MUNICIPAL CODE (CLUDC 1-26) TO:
  - i. Amend *Section 17.22.030 (C) Commercial Zoning Districts and Table 2.6; 17.24.030 Industrial Land Use Table 2-10; and Special Purpose Land Use Table 2-14 of Section 17.26.030* to Facilitate Economic Development by Allowing More Uses in More Zoning Districts; and
  - ii. Amend *Section 17.71.030 (F) (2) - Limited Term Permit - Events* to clarify the Limited Term Permit Process; and
  - iii. Amend *Section 17.71.060 E - Use Permit and Minor Use Permits* to Make Minor Modifications to the Minor Use Permit Process; and
  - iv. Amend *Section 17.90.030 - Restrictions on Nonconforming Structures and Uses Through 17.90.080 - Nonconforming Due to Lack of a Use Permit* to allow for easier reuse and expansion of non-conforming structures and uses.
3. resolution of the Fort Bragg Planning Commission recommending that the City Council adopt the above referenced ordinances.
4. EIR Addendum

**NOTIFICATION:**

The following “Notify Me” lists:

- Economic Development Planning
- Fort Bragg Downtown Businesses
- Tourism and Marketing