



AGENDA ITEM 9C

MEETING: July 15, 2026
TO: Humboldt LAFCo Commissioners
FROM: Colette Santsche, Executive Officer
SUBJECT: **Status of Applications, Projects, and Agency Coordination**
The Commission will receive a report summarizing active and future proposals, projects, and agency coordination efforts. This report is being presented for information only.

BACKGROUND

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 delegates Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) with regulatory and planning duties to coordinate the logical formation and development of local governmental agencies. This includes approving or disapproving proposals for annexation, sphere of influence amendments, and outside agency service requests.

DISCUSSION

Following is a summary of active and future proposals.

Active Applications

Ferndale Fire Protection District Goodwill Response Area Annexation
See Agenda Item 8B.

Special Studies

North Coastal Fire Study

Matrix Consulting Group is continuing efforts to reach out to all participating agencies to schedule initial interviews to kick off the project and fulfill data needs. Matrix is currently working to develop current state assessments for the City of Trinidad and the Arcata Fire Protection District with the initial data they've collected. In the coming weeks, Matrix will be interviewing the remaining participating agencies and scheduling a site visit to meet with participating agencies and observe facilities and service areas in person.

Legislative and Policy Initiatives

Commercial Timberlands Advocacy

There are no significant updates since the Commission's June meeting. Staff continues to monitor opportunities to advance legislative efforts addressing the statutory exclusion of commercial timberlands under Fire Protection District Law (Health and Safety Code section 13811).

As previously reported, draft legislation was developed in coordination with Assemblymember Chris Rogers' office but did not move forward during the 2026 legislative session. Staff coordinated early on with stakeholder organizations, including Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) and Calforests, to evaluate potential policy refinements, cost-recovery approaches, and opportunities to build broader

statewide support. Staff also anticipates additional outreach to the California Fire Chiefs Association (CalChiefs) and the Fire Districts Association of California (FDAC) to further assess interest before pursuing future legislative sponsorship.

In coordination with the Fire Services Planning Team, staff hopes to continue legislative advocacy efforts by developing case studies documenting local experiences navigating fire district annexations, consolidations, and service reorganizations under existing law. Staff also intends to pursue opportunities to coordinate field visits with legislators and statewide stakeholder organizations to provide firsthand understanding of the fire protection challenges facing rural communities that interface with commercial timberlands. These efforts are intended to build a stronger factual foundation for future legislative discussions and potential statutory reforms.

Agency Coordination

Fire Services Coordination Efforts

A portion of Measure Z funds granted to the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association has been allocated to providing technical assistance for sustainable community fire protection to address the lack of complete community coverage and sustainable revenue. An informal working group consisting of County of Humboldt (Board of Supervisors, Public Works, and County Administrative Office), LAFCo, and Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association representatives continue to meet as needed to address service and funding needs on a countywide basis, including the following fire services planning efforts:

- Mattole Reorganization including Petrolia FPD, Telegraph Ridge FPD, and Honeydew VFC.
- Highway 299 goodwill response area between Blue Lake and Willow Creek FPDs, including legislative options to address rural highway calls.
- Direct charge list support for various departments.
- Annual Reports for the Humboldt County Fire Chief Association's highlighting service calls and achievements of emergency response providers throughout Humboldt County.
- Creating a toolkit for new and existing fire districts to understand all statutory, financial and reporting requirements under state law.

McKinleyville Incorporation Exploration

The McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) established the McKinleyville Incorporation Exploration Subcommittee (MIESC) in 2022 to research and evaluate the potential incorporation of McKinleyville as a city. The subcommittee continues to meet regularly to discuss governance, municipal services, fiscal considerations, and community outreach related to incorporation.

Current efforts include evaluating potential incorporation boundaries and service responsibilities with assistance from a Planning Assistance Team. Cal Poly Humboldt has completed a preliminary appendix compiling publicly available financial information to support development of the forthcoming Initial Feasibility Analysis (IFA). The appendix is intended as a background resource and does not constitute an IFA or Comprehensive Fiscal Analysis. Separately, Cal Poly Humboldt continues to prepare an Economic Development Study incorporating community input that will help inform governance and economic development considerations.

Funding has also been secured to prepare an Initial Feasibility Analysis (IFA) to evaluate the preliminary fiscal and operational feasibility of incorporation. The IFA will help determine whether the community should pursue a formal incorporation proposal, which would require an application to LAFCo and preparation of a Comprehensive Fiscal Analysis pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act. LAFCo staff is scheduled to provide a presentation to the MMAC on July 22, 2026, regarding the incorporation process, LAFCo's statutory responsibilities, and the anticipated next steps should the community decide to pursue incorporation.

Recent Inquiries and Coordination

- 1) Responded to a request for information regarding the process for converting a Resort Improvement District (RID) into a Community Services District (CSD). RID No. 1 may wish to evaluate whether continuing under its existing principal act remains the most effective governance structure or whether reorganization under the Community Services District Law would better position the District for future operations. In 2010, the Legislature enacted special provisions to streamline this transition for certain legacy districts. Those provisions have since expired; staff provided RID No. 1 with information on the standard LAFCo reorganization process, should they be interested in pursuing reorganization. Staff also coordinated with CALAFCO's legislative committee to explore whether a legislative proposal on this topic would be supported.
- 2) Responded to a request for information by Orick CSD on the process of activating latent powers, specifically park and recreation services. Staff has scheduled a meeting with the District to further coordinate.
- 3) Received and reviewed an inspection report on the Palmer Creek CSD public water system.
- 4) Responded to an inquiry from a property owner in the outlying Fortuna area regarding City boundary limits and water service provision in the Fox Hill Lane area.
- 5) Responded to an inquiry from a community member interested in purchasing property in Arcata regarding City boundary limits and its SOL.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Commission receive and file this report.