



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

701 OCEAN STREET, FOURTH FLOOR, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4070
Planning (831) 454-2580 Public Works (831) 454-2160

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

MEETING DATE: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 , 2026, AT 9:30 AM

LOCATION: COMMUNITY ROOM (BASEMENT)
COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
701 OCEAN STREET, ROOM 020 (BASEMENT)
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Roll Call:

Present: Chair Barton, Rizzuto, Nickel, Jimenez, Shepherd

Absent: None

2. Additions and Corrections to Agenda:

Item 13 - Two items of late correspondence

3. Declaration of Ex Parte Communications: None

4. Announcement by Commission members of items removed from the Consent to Regular agenda - None

5. Public Comment: Planning Commission will hear brief (2-minute maximum) statements regarding items not on this agenda

Two members of the public spoke regarding the BESS Ordinance

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

6. Action on the Consent Agenda (Item 7)

Action: Approve Consent Agenda

Motion/Second: Nickell/Jimenez

Ayes: Barton, Nickell, Jimenez, Shepherd

Abstain: Rizzuto

Motion Carried 4/1 abstention

7. Approval of Minutes

To approve the minutes of January 14, 2026, Planning Commission meeting, as submitted by the Community Development and Infrastructure Department.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

8. 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report

Public Hearing to consider the 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report.

SUPERVISORAL DISTRICT: County-wide
PROJECT PLANNER: Jacob Lutz, (831) 454-3136
EMAIL: Jacob.Lutz@santacruzcountyca.gov

ACTION: Approve as recommended with additional input provided by Commissioner Jimenez:

1. General Tribal Consultation input requested in future report
2. PC study session request regarding update on State legislation regarding Energy Storage Systems
3. Provide tribal input on coastal access to Pajaro River mouth and increase public access with coordination with Land Trust.
4. Urban Service Line Amendment Process Information
5. Provide input on whether there may be any more ADU plans on the CDI web page
6. Provide summary description on each State legislation bill included in report specific to H3D (limit rental application fees charged by rental property managers)
7. Provide more information regarding Nexus Study
8. Appreciated calling out of transportation improvements and goal to move away from cars

*Motion/Second: Barton/Nickell
Ayes: Barton, Rizzuto, Nickell, Jimenez, Shepherd*

Motion Carried 5/0

10. Secretary's Report on Upcoming Meetings and Agendas:

- Annual Code Amendments (formerly Housekeeping Amendments): Spring
- Paul Sweet Housing Project to come back to the PC as early as March 11th or March 25th
- Bess Study Session (Stephanie Hansen): The intent would be to do Environmental Review and come back to the Planning Commission. A study session will be set prior to PC consideration
- Nexus Study Session (Stephanie Hansen): Not fully completed, Policy Staff still reviewing; the nexus study will probably go to the Board; Elements evaluated include: Affordable Housing Impact Fee (AHIF) and whether that is set at appropriate level given market conditions and building projects, need for affordable housing, inclusionary rates for providing affordable housing within a market rate housing development currently set by measure J at 15% and whether an adjustment for that is recommended.
- Capitola Road Project Update (Matt Machado): BOS approved; BOS frustrated with State laws tying County's hands, BOS validated PC approval and directed public to voice frustrations to State Legislators.

- Graham Hill Builders Remedy (Matt Machado): Incomplete application, sewer far away and not sized properly, outside of the service boundaries, do not think they will have a complete application, project may get extensions to completeness

11. Community Development and Infrastructure Department Director's Report:

- Frustrations with State related to 841 Capitola Road: Issues relate to the building code which has changed over time and is the floor of what CDI can allow to be built structurally for health and safety. County is trying to remove local restrictions via County code revisions to have minimum building code standards. CA building code is restrictive. This is not just local regulations but a building code issue. To Commissioner Rizutto's point about restrictions, CDI is reviewing disaster relief as a policy, one of 12 County Streamline Santa Cruz projects. This is a balancing act between local and state regulations; note that it is not all under County Control. CDI is trying to provide right level of code requirements while providing as much flexibility.

12. County Counsel's Report: None

13. Written Communications:

- Two late items related to Bess ordinance, Battery Energy Storage, included as late additions and corrections.

nate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, visitors chamber is located in an accessible facility. If you require special assistance in order to participate, please (TTD/ TTY call 711) at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to make arrangements. As a courtesy to those smoke and scent free. *Si desea asistir la reunión y participar en los comentarios públicos y necesita traducción, 454-2336 al menos 72 horas antes de la reunión para hacer los arreglos.*