



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

AGENDA ITEM NO.  
**L-1**

Meeting Date: February 9, 2016

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Robert S. Wall, Interim Director, Planning and Building Department **RSW**

Subject: **Vacation Home Rental Zone Reclassification Petition**, County-wide  
 Application Number 9986  
 Case Number ZRP-15-003

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Open the public hearing and receive the staff report and public comment.
2. Close public hearing.
3. Accept the petition by approving the attached resolution (Attachment 1) based on the findings in the staff report and testimony received about the project.
4. Direct the Clerk of the Board to give notice of the decision to the Planning and Building Department, the Assessor's Office and any other interested party.

*Michelle Nielsen*  
*Steven Santos*

Prepared by \_\_\_\_\_  
 Michelle Nielsen, Planner  
 Steven Santos, Development Assistance Manager

CAO Approval *Cheyl Dillingham*

REVIEW:  
 Auditor \_\_\_\_\_ County Counsel *NAD* Human Resources \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF ITEM:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Consent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Departmental  
*X* Public Hearing  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No. \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting of: \_\_\_\_\_

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Upon motion of Supervisor *Bass*  
 Seconded by Supervisor *Fennell*

Ayes *Sundberg, Fennell, Lovelace, Bohn, Bass*  
 Nays \_\_\_\_\_  
 Abstain \_\_\_\_\_  
 Absent \_\_\_\_\_

and carried by those members present, the Board hereby approves the recommended action contained in this Board report.

Dated: *Feb. 9, 2016*

By: *Kathy Hayes*  
 Kathy Hayes, Clerk of the Board

## **SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

A Vacation Home Rental Working Group is responsible for all costs associated with processing of the project and fees are deposited into Current Planning Revenue Account (1100-277-608000). It should be noted that the public / private partnership with the Vacation Home Rental Working Group comprised of owners, operators and rental companies exists for the purpose of covering the expense of bringing this petition to the Board now and enable a timely resolution for owners and concerned neighbors alike.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### ***Petition***

Pursuant to Section 312-50.4.1.3 Humboldt County Code (HCC), the Director of the Humboldt County Planning and Building Department is recommending that the Board of Supervisors initiate an amendment to the County's Zoning Regulations, Coastal and Inland. The purpose of this amendment is to establish regulations allowing for Vacation Home Rentals (VHRs) by permitting occupancy of existing permitted single family residential units on a transient basis (less than 30 days) subject to securing a Special Permit and conformance with specified standards and performance criteria. The proposed petition would seek to amend the General Provisions, Definitions, and the Use Type provisions of both Coastal and Inland zoning regulations, Sections 313-1 and 314-1 et seq. respectively, thereby allowing VHRs in zoning districts that specify single family residences or one-family dwellings as a principally permitted use. The impetus for this Petition is an increase of existing residences operating as Vacation Home Rentals. The increase in VHRs can be attributed to steady growth in the local Tourism and Hospitality industry. This has also resulted in an increase in code violation complaints.

The County attempted to address Vacation Home Rentals once before. In 1997 the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 2154 that established the Vacation Home Rental (V) combining zone. Like other combining zones, the V combining zone supplements the principal zoning district and only applies to land designated on the zoning map. For parcels within a V combining zone, project proponents may apply for a Special Permit for a Vacation Home Rental. To date the only geographic area designated with a V combining zone is in the Inland portion of Shelter Cove. For the Coastal Zone areas of the County, the County considered an amendment to the certified Local Coastal Program (LCP) that would have mirrored the regulations adopted for the Inland areas of the County and applied a V combining zone to residential neighborhoods in the Coastal area of Shelter Cove, but that effort was never completed due to the necessity to modify the ordinance to meet requirements for final Coastal Commission certification, the statutory time frame for this to occur, and staff workload at the time, which included the General Plan Update. Revisiting the Vacation Home Rental issue has always been a consideration for the Department and was included as an element of the County's 2014 Coastal Commission Grant application submittal but became unfunded when the statewide competition for available funding forced a reduction in individual awards and the scope of work. Since the adoption of the V combining zone, rezoning requests for adding the V combining zone to other communities has not materialized. This may speak more to the difficulty in securing the requisite 50% property owner interest in a rezoning petition which can often be an overwhelming proposition. Also of note, the Planning and Building Department has not received any Special Permit applications for a Vacation Home Rental in the inland portion of Shelter Cove with a V combining zone indicating that properties further from recreation areas and services may be of lower demand. Furthermore, a potential flaw of the combining zone approach is the possibility of VHRs becoming concentrated in a narrow geographic area. Such oversaturation could change the residential nature and character of a neighborhood or community.

This petition is distinct from the 1997 effort because it does not use a combining zone as the method for enabling and regulating VHRs. Once the amendment is approved by the Board and the LCP is certified by the Coastal Commission, the amendments will be in effect county-

wide. However, like the V combining zone, Vacation Home Rentals would still require a Special Permit.

As contemplated, the proposed petition will not initiate amendments to the regulations to allow VHRs on parcels located in the Inland portions of the County that are zoned Agricultural Exclusive (AE) or Timber Production Zone (TPZ). In the AE Inland zoning district, only farm dwellings are principally permitted. A farm dwelling is defined as "[a] dwelling on farm premises for permanent residents of the farm, such as the owner, lessee, foreman, or others whose principal employment is the operation of the farm..." (Section 314-141 Humboldt County Code). In TPZ Inland, only one-family dwellings for the owner or caretaker are principally permitted. In other words, neither the AE nor TPZ Inland zoning regulations allow a single family residence as a principally permitted use. Extending the scope of the amendment to include VHRs on lands zoned AE and TPZ will be more a complicated and problematic amendment and raise issues of conversion and compatibility with resource land uses. Furthermore, this would trigger additional analysis of consistency and compatibility with the County's Open Space element.

Any amendment to the Coastal Zoning Regulations will require an amendment to the County's Local Coastal Program which must be certified by the California Coastal Commission before taking effect. Planning staff has had preliminary conversations about this Petition with staff of the North Coast District office. Coastal Commission staff has indicated that the Coastal Act does not view transient occupancy of a residence to be an intensification of use and identified at least six coastal jurisdictions that have made allowances for VHRs in their zoning regulations. In areas with adequate infrastructure, VHRs are viewed as providing visitor serving accommodations which are a priority use under the Coastal Act. However, an LCP amendment to allow VHRs in the resource production zoning districts will raise issues of conversion and compatibility. The Coastal resource zoning districts are Agricultural Exclusive (AE), Commercial Timber (TC), and Timber Production Zone (TPZ). Although a single family residence is a principally permitted use in these three zoning districts, a LCP seeking to permit VHRs in these zoning districts would raise a concern from the Coastal Commission of potential conversion of resource lands which is a substantial issue under the Coastal Act, and would likely delay certification. As with the Inland code, an amendment to include VHRs in these three resource zoning district in the Coastal Zone will be more complicated and problematic and necessitate a more robust analysis of the amendment's consistency with the County's Open Space element as discussed above.

### ***Tourism and Hospitality Industry***

As your Board is aware, Prosperity, the comprehensive economic development strategy for Humboldt County, identifies Tourism as one of the industry clusters forming the local economy. Along with the many cultural and natural assets of the area, diverse hospitality and lodging options are essential to bringing visitors to the region. Vacation Home Rentals provide market choice for travelers seeking more space, privacy and amenities like full kitchens. For these reasons, Vacation Home Rentals in permitted single family homes often compliment rather than compete with other lodging formats such as hotels, especially during peak events such as graduation.

Examination of Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) and Humboldt County Tourism Business Improvement District (HCTBID) revenue indicates that the lodging sector is steadily growing. Data from calendar years 2012 through 2014 show a more than 10% increase in revenue each year.<sup>1</sup> Zoning regulations must be updated to provide a legal pathway for Vacation Home Rental entrepreneurs to obtain the necessary land use permits. The lack of legal options forces owners and businesses to operate on a black market basis in what is otherwise a legitimate and vital economic sector. It also makes County enforcement more difficult without guidelines to discern which operations are compatible with local neighborhoods.

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<sup>1</sup> TOT and HCTBID revenue in calendar year 2012 = \$1,283,436; Calendar year 2013 = \$1,586,640; Calendar year 2014 = \$1,817,728. Source: Humboldt County Tax Collector

## **Neighborhood Compatibility and Enforcement**

From 2010 to 2014, the Planning and Building Department investigated two complaints regarding vacation rentals. In 2015 the Department opened six vacation rental violation cases. This significant increase created enforcement challenges for the County because a viable permitting alternative to legitimize the VHRs was not available. While it is true that under current policy owners may apply for a zone reclassification to create a V combining zone, this would have been on a spot, parcel by parcel, basis. The financial and technical burden on individual owners created an insurmountable and impractical burden. Even if successful in such an effort, owners would then still have to apply for and acquire a Special Permit. This petition's goal is to ultimately resolve the first part of that burden and provide Vacation Home Rental owners the opportunity to apply directly for a Special Permit.

The majority of vacation rental complaints relate to noise and parking. While vacation rentals are not the same as owner or tenant occupied homes with regard to potential impacts, they can be compatible in many neighborhoods through reasonable and consistent management policies. Proposed regulations would include a set of performance standards for all VHRs. The Special Permit process provides neighborhood notification and the opportunity for a public hearing. Specific conditions of approval can also be added to the Special Permit to address any unique neighborhood issues or concerns. Examples could include "quiet hours" or allowable number of guests or vehicles.

### **Number of Vacation Home Rentals**

Informal research conducted in September 2015 by the Vacation Home Rental Working Group examined vacation rental websites in an attempt to estimate the number of Vacation Home Rentals in the unincorporated areas of the county. This unscientific poll has limitations because it is a single snap shot in time showing only the vacancies available when the research was conducted. It does not account for rentals that were occupied or rentals that are seasonal. In addition, these websites do not always easily differentiate whether the rental is located within an incorporated city. However, despite these challenges, this data does provide a first glimpse into the order of magnitude of the number of vacation rentals. According to this poll, approximately 450 vacation rentals were available county-wide, including incorporated cities. Filtering for just the unincorporated areas of the county, it is estimated that approximately 150 vacation home rentals were available at the time of the poll. This figure includes both whole homes and rooms in homes.

### **Summary**

*Project Location:* County-wide, both Coastal and Inland, in zoning districts that specify residential single family, excepting for resource production zoning districts.

*Basis of Petition:* The amendment is necessary to enable the Vacation Home Rental market to operate with certainty and to provide standards and performance criteria to ensure compatibility with neighborhoods. The amendments will also provide a more practical mechanism for enforcement when VHR operations violate established standards.

Staff believes that the findings can be made on the basis of the submitted evidence.

### **Issues**

Should the Petition be accepted, a number of issues must be analyzed during the Zone Reclassification review process. Some of the major issues include:

- Housing Element consistency. The potential conversion of secondary dwelling units (SDUs) and two-family or multi-family dwellings to VHRs will be evaluated. These types of dwelling units represent affordable housing opportunities for Humboldt County residents and are part of the County's Housing Inventory. Protection of local housing opportunities is an important part of the review.

- Density limitations. Too many VHRs in an area can change the nature and character of a community or neighborhood. Strategies for managing density and avoiding oversaturation will be examined including policy research of other jurisdictions.
- Enforcement mechanism. When a VHR is not operated properly, the neighborhood impacts can be significant. A credible and predictable enforcement mechanism is an integral component of this process.
- Resource protection. Vacation Home Rentals in timber or agriculture zones can result in conversion of resource lands. Appropriate protections for resource lands in these zones will be included in the review.
- Performance standards. Noise, parking, infrastructure capacity, special events, total number of occupants, quiet hours, and emergency contact are some of the issues that will need to be addressed in the performance standards.
- Coastal Zone. As discussed above, the proposed amendment will require an amendment to the County's Local Coastal Program and certification from the California Coastal Commission before becoming effective. This process requires a formal application and a hearing before the Coastal Commission. Coastal Commission staff has preliminarily advised Planning staff that an LCP amendment to allow VHRs on lands zoned for resource production will raise conversion issues.
- The existing Vacation Home Rental (V) combining zone regulations. Whether to leave, modify, or strike the existing adopted regulations will have to be decided.

### **Required Findings**

Section 312-50.1 HCC recognizes that changes to the zoning regulations to reflect changing social, economic or environmental conditions, or changes in state law is needed from time to time. The Board of Supervisors may initiate amendments to the zoning code by a majority vote based on a recommendation of the County Planning and Building Department pursuant to Section 312-50.3 of the HCC. The amendment to the zoning code may only proceed if the Petition demonstrates the required findings specified in Humboldt County Code Section 312-50.5.2 and State Planning and Zoning Law, Government Code Section 65000 et seq. The following four findings must be made:

1. The amendment will be in the public interest; and
2. The amendment will be consistent with the General Plan; and
3. If the amendment requires a Local Coastal Plan amendment, that the amendment is in conformity with policies of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of the Coastal Act; and
4. The amendment does not reduce the residential density for any parcel below that utilized by the Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law.

The petition for amendment is in the public interest because it expands the opportunities for transient habitation while ensuring neighborhood compatibility and public input by employing the use of Special Permit, a discretionary permit, as the permitting mechanism. The Petition is consistent with the General Plan because: 1) it is to allow the use of existing permitted single family residences as VHRs while not extending to lands zoned for resource production; and 2) by identifying the need for further evaluation of consistency with Housing Element, including attendant measures to ensure consistency. With respect to conformance with the Coastal Act, as discussed above, Coastal Commission staff has advised staff that in areas with adequate infrastructure the conversion of an existing single family residence furthers the Coastal Act's policies for visitor serving facilities, provided this allowance does not extend to lands zoned for resource production. In regard to the housing element, the Petition will not change or alter the residential density of any parcel as designated by the General Plan. Rather the Petition is to allow the transient habitation of an existing permitted single family residence with a Special Permit.

The decision to be made at this time is whether or not the Board will accept the proposed Petition for processing, review and consideration. If accepted for review and consideration, final approval of the proposed Amendment will be dependent upon additional data and analysis

demonstrating that the amendment is in the public interest, is consistent with a comprehensive view of the General Plan, is in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, and will not reduce the residential density for any parcel below that utilized by the Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law.

**Staff Recommendation**

Current Planning Division staff believes that there is sufficient evidence to approve the Petition request for the reasons previously discussed herein as to public interest, General Plan consistency, Coastal Act conformance, and that the amendment may be structured such that there will be no reduction in residential density and will maintain compliance with housing element law. Board acceptance of the Petition would allow for the necessary in-depth staff analysis of project impacts. As noted above, accepting the petition is only the first step in processing, reviewing and considering this request. Should the Board find "community values and assumptions have changed" or "the amendment is necessary to maintain established uses otherwise consistent with a comprehensive view of the plan," staff recommends the Board accept the petition by adopting the attached resolution and directing Current Planning Division staff to process the application with land use designations and zones as proposed therein.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There will be no impact on the General Fund. The Vacation Home Rental Working Group is responsible for paying all actual costs involved in the processing of the application.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

The project was referred to Humboldt County Tax Collector, California Coastal Commission, Public Works, McKinleyville Community Services District, and the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee. All of these agencies recommended approval of the petitions. Should the petition be accepted, the California Environmental Quality Act dictates that responsible and trustee state and local agencies also will be involved in the referral process of the Amendment, including Native American Consultation pursuant to SB 18, and as part of the environmental review for the project.

**ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Your Board could find that the project is not in the public interest, and reject the Petition.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment 1: Resolution No. 16-20
- Attachment 2: Excerpts from Humboldt County Code, Inland, Section 314-1 et seq.:  
Section 314-37.1 HCC, Combining Zone Vacation Home Rentals (V)  
Section 314-157 HCC, Definitions, Vacation Home Rentals  
Section 314-177.6 HCC, Residential Use Types, Single Family Residential
- Attachment 3: Letters of Support

**ATTACHMENT 1**

**RESOLUTION NO. 16-20**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
Certified copy of portion of proceedings, Meeting of February 9, 2016

RESOLUTION NO. 16-20

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT  
APPROVING THE ZONE RECLASSIFICATION PETITION TO ALLOW EXISTING  
PERMITTED SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCES AS VACATION HOME RENTALS, CASE  
NUMBER ZRP-15-003**

**WHEREAS**, Section 312-50.2 of the Humboldt County Code) allows the Board of Supervisors to initiate, grant, deny, or modify proposed amendments to Zoning Regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 312-50.4 HCC allows the Board of Supervisors to initiate amendments to the zoning code by a majority vote based on recommendation of the Planning and Building Department; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 312-50.5.2 Humboldt County Code requires that the petition demonstrate that the change will be in the public interest, consistent with the General Plan, and in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of the Coastal Act;

**WHEREAS**, State Planning and Zoning Law (Government Code Section 65000 et seq.) requires that the petition not reduce the residential density for any parcel below that utilized by the Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law;

**WHEREAS**, the Current Planning Division staff has evidence within planning files and as presented herein in support of finding the change is in the public interest, consistent with the General Plan, in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of the Coastal Act, and will not reduce the residential density for any parcel below that utilized by the Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law.


**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors that the following findings are hereby made:

1. There is factual evidence in support of the petition, that the petition is in the public interest, is consistent with the General Plan, in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of the Coastal Act, and will not reduce the residential density for any parcel below that utilized by the Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that based on the above findings, the findings in the staff report, evidence in the file for the project, and public testimony received on the project, the Board of Supervisors accepts the Vacation Home Rental Zone Reclassification Petition as recommended by the Planning and Building Department, Case No. ZR-15-003; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Clerk of the Board is directed to provide notice of this decision to all interested parties.

Dated: February 9, 2016

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
REX BOHN  
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
Certified copy of portion of proceedings, Meeting of February 9, 2016

RESOLUTION NO. 16-20


Adopted on motion by Supervisor Bass, seconded by Supervisor Fennell, and the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Sundberg, Fennell, Lovelace, Bohn, Bass  
NAYS: Supervisors --  
ABSENT: Supervisors --  
ABSTAIN: Supervisors --

STATE OF CALIFORNIA )  
County of Humboldt )

I, KATHY HAYES, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, County of Humboldt, State of California, do hereby certify the foregoing to be an original made in the above-entitled matter by said Board of Supervisors at a meeting held in Eureka, California.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of said Board of Supervisors.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
By ANA HARTWELL  
Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the  
County of Humboldt, State of California

## ATTACHMENT 2

### EXCERPTS FROM HUMBOLDT COUNTY CODE, INLAND, SECTION 314-1 ET SEQ.

#### 314-37 "V" COMBINING ZONE DESIGNATIONS

##### 314-37.1 V - VACATION HOME RENTAL

- 37.1.1 **Purpose.** The purpose of these regulations is to increase and enhance coastal public access, access to other County visitor serving facilities, to preserve the residential character of neighborhoods by controlling and regulating transient uses which may be incompatible with the character of the neighborhood. (Former Section INL#315-10(A); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)
- 37.1.2 **Applicability.** These regulations shall apply to all lands designated "V" on the zoning maps. (Former Section INL#315-10(B); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)
- 37.1.3 **Principally Permitted Uses.** The following uses may be permitted upon obtaining a Special Permit on all lands designated with the "V" or Vacation Home Rental Combining Zone:
- 37.1.3.1 Vacation Home Rentals as defined in Section C: Index of Definitions of Language and Legal Terms. (Former Section INL#315-10(C)(1); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)
- 37.1.4 **Performance Standards.** All vacation home rentals are subject to the following performance standards:
- 37.1.4.1 Compliance with residential parking standards as required by Section 314-109.1 of this code; (Former Section INL#315-10(D)(1); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)
- 37.1.4.2 The number of occupants shall not exceed ten (10) persons. (Former Section INL#315-10(D)(2); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)
- 37.1.4.3 Availability of the rental unit to the public shall not be advertised on-site; (Former Section INL#315-10(D)(3); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)
- 37.1.4.4 Owners of rental units must provide the name, address and telephone number of a contact person for the unit to all occupied residences within a 300 foot radius of the rental unit. The notice shall be mailed to property owners prior to renting the unit and thereafter as contact information changes. An owner of a rental unit who does not reside in a five-mile radius of the residence being rented, shall designate a person within a 5-mile radius of the rental unit, as the local contact person. The owner or contact person must be available 24 hours a day to respond to tenant and neighborhood questions or concerns and to otherwise be responsible for assuring that the rental unit complies with the requirements of this Section and other applicable provisions of the code; (Former Section INL#315-10(D)(4); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)

- 37.1.4.5 Prior to commencing vacation home rentals, the applicant shall obtain a Business license from the Humboldt County Tax Collector. The owner/operator shall collect and remit to the Humboldt County Tax Collector the transient occupancy tax; (Former Section INL#315-10(D)(5); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)
- 37.1.4.6 It is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure that trash will be disposed of (picked-up) on a weekly basis. (Former Section INL#315-10(D)(6); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)
- 37.1.4.7 Compliance with the requirements of this Section shall be considered conditions of approval. Noncompliance will constitute a nuisance subject to administrative penalties and revocation of the business license. (Former Section INL#315-10(D)(7); Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 2, 12/9/97)

### 314-157 DEFINITIONS (V)

**Vacation Home Rental:** Vacation Home Rental includes the transient use of single and two family (duplex) dwelling units. Vacation home rentals are subject to the provisions in Section 314-22.2, Greenway and Open Space Combining Zone. (Former Section INL#312-75.5; Added by Ord. 2154, Sec. 1, 12/9/97)

### 314-177 RESIDENTIAL USE TYPES

Residential Use Types include the occupancy of dwelling units on a wholly or principally non-transient basis. Residential uses do not include institutional living arrangements involving the provision of a special kind of care or forced residence, such as in nursing homes, orphanages, asylum, and prisons, except as otherwise provided for various community care facilities.

...

177.6 **Single Family Residential.** The Single Family Residential Use Type includes the residential occupancy of a single detached main building by one family on a non-transient basis, except for rental of single family dwellings as vacation homes, where the use would not be otherwise different than the uses allowed to be made of single family dwellings. (See also, Vacation Home Rental.) (From Section CZ#A313-5(B); Added to INL by Ord. 2205, Sec. 1, 4/11/00)

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

# Jon O'Connor



524 5<sup>th</sup> Street • Eureka, CA 95501 • Phone: 858-692-3581 • Web: JonOConnor.com • Email: adventurctraining@yahoo.com

Date: 9/17/15

Dear Supervisor Ryan Sundberg,

My name is Jon O'Connor and I am the owner and operator of Humboldt Bay Tourism Center and a small business consultant in Eureka, California. With my wife, Amy Cirincione O'Connor, we own two vacation rental properties in Humboldt County. We have had nothing but positive experiences with these properties and the guests we have hosted. We urge the County Board of Supervisors to support the proposed mapping changes to the General Plan Update that would facilitate short-term rental activity throughout Humboldt County.

We purchased both properties in dilapidated, near tear-down states and have lovingly restored them. Both homes initially served as our primary residence, but as our family grew and we moved, we rented them out to out-of-town guests as a way of supplementing our income and promoting our beloved North Coast as a tourist destination.

Our vacation rentals cater to a specific demographic that is drawn to Humboldt County for its natural, rugged beauty and seeking unique, boutique accommodations. Our spaces (a modern, industrial loft in Old Town and rustic-chic cabins on the Samoa Peninsula) attract guests from San Francisco, Portland, the East Coast, and Europe. Contrary to some of the anti-short stay sentiment I have heard, our guests have sophisticated taste and are responsible, appreciative caretakers of our properties.

By advertising through sites such as Airbnb and VRBO, we are able to screen our guests prior to their visits, have personal interactions while they are here, and offer them an intimate, "insider" perspective on the area. We take our role as home owners seriously, as see ourselves not just as hosts to our guests, but as ambassadors for our County. We love where we live, and deeply value the opportunity to introduce our guests to Humboldt Bay, local craft businesses, and the people in our community.

We believe vacation rentals are a key component to the economic future of our region. We love sharing our home with guests and hope that the Board of Supervisors will help us continue to do so.

Sincerely,

Jon O'Connor

**M.S. Organizational Leadership**

**Projects:**

**GROW** | [HumboldtCountyGrown.com](http://HumboldtCountyGrown.com)

**TOUR** | [HumboldtBayTourismCenter.com](http://HumboldtBayTourismCenter.com)

**BEACH** | [OysterBeach.info](http://OysterBeach.info)