RESOLUTION NO. 256-32

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARCATA CONFIRMING THE EXISTENCE OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY AND RATIFYING THE DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES' PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Title II, Chapter 6 (Emergency Operations and Functions) of the Arcata Municipal Code empowers the City Manager, in his capacity as Director of Emergency Services, to proclaim the existence or threatened existence of a local emergency when conditions warrant; and

WHEREAS, that chapter of the Arcata Municipal Code defines a "local emergency" as the duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the territorial limits of the City of Arcata, caused by conditions including fire, which require the combined forces of other political subdivisions to combat; and

WHEREAS, at approximately 2:30 p.m. on January 2, 2026, the Arcata Fire District responded to the 800 block of 10th Street following reports of a large volume of smoke originating from the downtown commercial district and encountered a well-established, rapidly spreading fire in a large, two-story commercial structure containing businesses on the ground floor and residential apartments above; and

WHEREAS, due to extreme wind and gust conditions, the fire spread rapidly and engulfed four buildings located between H Street and I Street and extending to the alley between 9th Street and 10th Street; and

WHEREAS, mutual aid was requested and fire suppression resources responded from throughout Humboldt County, including as far away as Weott in Southern Humboldt. Participating agencies included Arcata Fire District, Humboldt Bay Fire, Samoa Fire, Kneeland Fire, Westhaven Fire, Loleta Fire, Ferndale Fire, Fortuna Fire, Fieldbrook Fire, Blue Lake Fire, Rio Dell Fire, Arcata-Mad River Ambulance, CAL FIRE Trinidad, and CAL FIRE Weott. Every ladder truck in Humboldt County was deployed to this incident. Approximately 80 fire suppression personnel and an additional 20 support personnel were involved; and

WHEREAS, the destruction of multiple buildings and the associated emergency response efforts created substantial debris containing known and unknown hazardous materials, pollutants, and other contaminants; and

WHEREAS, the spread of these known and unknown pollutants and contaminants is likely to be exacerbated by ongoing and forecasted rainstorms, windstorms, and record-setting King Tide conditions; and

WHEREAS, the mobilization of local resources, coordination of an interagency response, acceleration of procurement of vital supplies, use of mutual aid, and ability to seek reimbursement from state and federal governments are critical to effectively responding to the fire damage and

associated environmental impacts, including providing assistance to local property owners, businesses, and residents who cumulatively are estimated to have sustained $20 million or more in damages; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act (Government Code section 8550 et seq.), state agencies and political subdivisions are authorized to take actions necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare, including providing extraordinary services through mutual aid (Government Code sections 8631–8633) and promulgating orders and regulations necessary to protect life and property; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of proclaiming a local emergency is to activate the City's emergency organization, authorize the exercise of extraordinary police powers, permit the issuance of emergency orders and regulations, provide immunity for emergency actions as authorized by law, and facilitate access to state and federal assistance; and

WHEREAS, on January 3, 2026, the City Manager, in his capacity as Director of Emergency Services, proclaimed the existence of a local emergency in the City of Arcata in response to the fire and resulting damage, including actual and potential threats to Humboldt Bay, local waterways, public property, and the environment, which exceed the capacity of City resources; and

WHEREAS, the declaration of a local emergency enables the City to more effectively respond to the impacts of the fire damage, including assessing actual and potential threats to Humboldt Bay, local waterways, public property, the local economy, and the environment, which likewise exceed the capacity of City resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARCATA AS FOLLOWS:

The City Council finds and determines that:

1. All of the above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein by reference.

2. The Proclamation of the City of Arcata Confirming the Existence of a Local Emergency, issued by the City Manager in his capacity as Director of Emergency Services and dated January 3, 2026, attached hereto as Exhibit A, is hereby confirmed and ratified.

3. The City Manager is authorized to take all necessary actions to qualify for and obtain state and federal assistance and reimbursement for costs incurred in response to this emergency.

4. During the existence of this local emergency, the powers, functions, and duties of the City's emergency organization, as set forth in Title II, Chapter 6 of the Arcata Municipal Code, are activated and shall be fully implemented.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

DATED:

ATTEST: APPROVED:

_____ _____

City Clerk, City of Arcata Mayor, City of Arcata

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. 256-32, passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Arcata, Humboldt County, California, held on the 9th day of January, 2026 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

_____

City Clerk, City of Arcata