# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

**For the meeting of:** 3/19/2026

**File #:** 26-194

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Planning and Building Department

**Agenda Section:** Public Hearing

SUBJECT:
Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation & Conservation District - Extension of Interim Permits
Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 401-112-021 & 401-112-024
Record No.: PLN-2025-19441
Samoa area

A three-year extension to previously approved Coastal Development and Conditional Use Permits (CUP-16-062/CDP-16-09, CUP-18-048/CDP-18-041) which authorized a variety of interim uses at Redwood Marine Terminal II (RMT II) for a 7-year period (2019 thru 2026). If approved the extension would authorize ongoing Interim Uses at the property through January 24, 2029. The interim uses would continue to occupy existing structures and infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION(S):
That the Planning Commission:

1. Adopt the resolution (Attachment 1), which does the following:

   a. Finds the Planning Commission has considered the Initial Study & Mitigated Negative Declaration and Addendums prepared for the project by the Harbor District as Lead Agency and finds that there are no significant impacts to the environment, as mitigated, as previously determined by the District; and

   b. Finds the requested extensions are supportable and that the Interim uses and development activities comply with the Humboldt Bay Area Plan and Zoning Ordinance; and

   c. Approves Extension of the Coastal Development Permits and Conditional Use Permits as recommended by staff, subject to the conditions of approval (Attachment 1A).

DISCUSSION:
**Project Location:** The property is located east of New Navy Base Road (Highway 255) in the Samoa

area and can be found on the east side of Vance Avenue between its intersection with LP Drive and Bay Street.

**Present General Plan Land Use Designation:**
Industrial/General (MG) [west of New Navy Base Rd]
Industrial/Coastal-Dependent (ML) [east of New Navy Base Rd]

**Present Zoning:**
MG - Industrial General
MC/A - Industrial/Coastal-Dependent together with
the Archaeological Resource Area Combining Zone

**Environmental Review:** As Lead Agency the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation & Conservation District (HBHRCD) completed an Initial Study and adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project (SCH #2015092007) as well as several subsequent Addendums. As a Responsible Agency under CEQA, the Planning Commission must consider the Initial Study & Mitigated Negative Declaration and Addendums prepared for the project, and the determinations made by the District that there are no significant impacts to the environment, as mitigated.

**State Appeal:** The property is located within the Coastal Zone and the Coastal Development Permit extensions are appealable to the Coastal Commission.

**Major Concerns:** None

**Monitoring Required:** None.

**Executive Summary:** The Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District are requesting a three-year extension to previously approved Coastal Development Permits and Conditional Use Permits which authorize the leasing of space and adaptive reuse of commercial and industrial buildings at the site of a former pulp mill in the Samoa/Fairhaven area.

*Site Description/History*
Approximately 100 acres in size, the property is the site of a former Pulp Mill built by the Georgia Pacific Corporation during the spring of 1964. Located east of New Navy Base Road and Vance Avenue on the North Spit in the Samoa/Fairhaven area, the 45-million-dollar facility operated from the site for over 40 years, producing bleached kraft pulp shipped to customers throughout the world. The mill permanently closed in 2008 following decades of litigation over air and water quality violations combined with a steep and sudden decline in the pulp market. Acquired by the Harbor District in August 2013, months later the property was declared to be a Superfund site, due to the condition of decaying storage vessels containing three million gallons of highly corrosive pulping liquors, 10,000 gallons of sulfuric and hydrochloric acids, and 250 pounds of mercury. While the pulping liquors have

been relocated from the site, there still remains hazardous materials and soil contamination. Areas of the site occupied by interim uses are not located within or nearby facilities storing these hazardous materials.

*Interim Uses on CDI lands*

Provisions for allowing interim uses on lands planned and zoned for Industrial/Coastal-Dependent uses (CDI) were certified by the California Coastal Commission in 2017. The regulations strive to conditionally allow certain commercial and industrial uses (not otherwise allowed) on vacant or underutilized CDI properties in areas around Humboldt Bay. The new code provisions include a number of requirements designed to filter out incompatible uses or development that would frustrate or preclude future occupancy by preferred uses (Coastal-Dependent or Coastal-related). These include requirements that leases to non-CDI uses include provisions allowing for recission and requiring relocation/removal of the interim use within six (6) months once a CDI use has been identified for a site. Additionally, Interim Uses may only be allowed after securing a Conditional use Permit and Coastal Development Permit which are subject to maximum term limits of seven (7) years under the initial approval and three (3) additional years with an extension request. The current proposal requests a 3-year extension of two different Coastal Permits and Use Permits held by the Harbor District. Both were approved by the Planning Commission on December 13, 2018 and became effective on January 24, 2019. This extension request was submitted by the District in December 2025.

*Interim Uses permitted to date countywide*

The Interim Use regulations further restrict permit terms to a maximum of two (2) years once certain thresholds are met (a) where 340 acres of MC-zoned land is occupied by permitted interim uses or (b) where 170 acres of MC-zoned land that formerly hosted CDI uses is occupied by interim uses. It is estimated that permits for between 1 and 2 acres of interim uses have been approved to date. All were granted to CDI-zoned properties in this area of the north spit. One of the permits authorized operation by a commercial distributor of liquefied petroleum products however the use is not in operation and the permit has expired. The other approved interim uses were approved by the Planning Commission on March 2, 2023 and area associated with a commercial cannabis cultivation, manufacturing, processing, and distribution facility on APN 401-112-030, which abuts the project parcel. The remaining uses are the subject of this extension request.

*Current Uses at site*

Attachment 3 contains an exhibit submitted by the applicant providing information on current tenancy. Interim uses primarily involve warehousing and storage associated with a variety of commercial and industrial tenants. Very little alteration or improvements to the site have been performed by these tenants. The property is also home to several Coastal-Dependent Uses associated with mariculture and sea salt harvesting, which predate the interim uses and continue to operate from the site.

*Findings for Extension*
The code allows extension of interim permits for up to 3 additional years under either of the following circumstances:

104.1.3.4.3.1 interim uses that can coexist with existing or future coastal-dependent industrial uses and other priority uses.

104.1.3.4.3.2 interim uses that provide structural repair, maintenance or upgrades of existing infrastructure, or install new infrastructure, that supports coastal-dependent industrial uses.

Given that the site has an established track record demonstrating that the interim uses can coexist with established Coastal-Dependent uses, it is fitting that the three year extension be granted.

*Coastal Zone Jurisdiction*
Easterly portions of the site along the bay lie within an area where jurisdiction for coastal permitting is retained by the State Coastal Commission. However, the majority of the site falls under local jurisdiction where permitting is appealable by/to the Coastal Commission. The interim uses are primarily operated from existing buildings situated within the local jurisdiction of the Coastal Zone.

**Environmental Review:** The requested extension to the previously approved permits does not result in new environmental impacts nor would it cause worsening of potentially significant impacts previously mitigated below a level of significance. Further environmental review of the project is therefore unnecessary as the related uses and development activities were previously analyzed under earlier environmental review.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:
The project was referred to responsible agencies and all responding agencies have either recommended approval or conditional approval. They are summarized and detailed in Attachment 4.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. The Planning Commission could choose to extend the Conditional Use Permit and Coastal Development Permits for a lesser amount of time than is being requested; and/or
2. The Planning Commission could elect to add or delete conditions of approval; or
3. The Planning Commission could deny approval of the requested permit extensions if unable to make all of the required findings. Planning Division staff is confident that the required findings can be made based on the submitted evidence and subject to the recommended conditions of approval. Consequently, planning staff does not recommend further consideration of these alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution
   A. Prior Conditions of Approval
   B. Prior Environmental Review
   C. Site Plan and Floor Plans
2. Location Map
3. Applicant's Evidence in Support of the Required Findings
4. Referral Agency Comments and Recommendations

**Applicant/Owner:**
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