



City of Colusa, California

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 5, 2026
TO: Planning Commission – Action Item – Public Hearing
FROM: Jake Morley, Planning Consultant

AGENDA ITEM: The project includes the recommendation to the City Council to adopt an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and recommend approval of the Public Safety Facility – Police Station, which includes a General Plan Amendment, Rezone and Site Permit Approval and Use Permit (Electronic Billboard) (“Project”) (State Clearinghouse # 2026061002).

Recommendation: Planning Commission to open the Public Hearing and review, and adopt Resolution No. 26-03 recommending that the City Council adopt an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, and recommend approval of the Public Safety Facility – Police Station, which includes a General Plan Amendment, Rezone, Site Permit Approval and Use Permit (Electronic Billboard) (“Project”) (State Clearinghouse # 2026061002). **Proposed**

Motions:

I move that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. 26-03, recommending the City Council's approval of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program that were prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act for the Public Safety Facility – Police Station (“Project”) (State Clearing House Number 2026061002)

I move that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. 26-04, recommending that the City Council approve the Public Safety Facility – Police Station, which includes a General Plan Amendment, Rezone, Site Plan Review, and Use Permit approval (Electric Billboard).

SUMMARY

The proposed project on 3.66 acres of vacant land along Highway 20, immediately north of 1717 Highway 20 (Rancho Colus), includes the following components:

1. General Plan Amendment – designation of the property from High Density Residential and Mixed Use to Public Facilities
2. Rezone the city-owned land from M-U-B Mixed Use Bridge Street and R-4 General Apartment zoning districts to P-F Public Facilities zoning district.

3. The review and approval of the Site Plan, which illustrates an approximate 11,707 square foot structure, with associated vehicle access and site improvements, and a use permit for the conversion of two static billboards into electronic ones.

BACKGROUND:

In 2024, the City of Colusa purchased 3.66 acres (APN 002-120-026) of vacant land along Highway 20 with the express desire to develop the site with a modern police station. The property is currently designated High-Density Residential on the General Plan Diagram and is located in the M-U-B Mixed Use Bridge Street and R-4 General Apartment zoning districts, with a C-3 Secondary Traffic Pattern Airport Overlay.

The site currently has two static billboards at its southwest corner, and as part of the recent Department of Transportation (Caltrans) improvement project, new curb, gutter, and sidewalk were installed, along with a Class II bicycle facility. Communication poles run along the eastern side of the property, behind the existing sidewalk. Storm drainage, electrical, and water services are located on Highway 20 right-of-way.

The site is 0.08 miles south of the Town & Country shopping center and 1.4 miles north of the Colusa Municipal Airport. The site is 0.77 miles east of the Sacramento River. The property is not located in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood zone.

Since 1977, the City of Colusa Police Department has operated at 260 6th Street, the Carnegie Library, constructed in 1906. Previously, the building was converted in 1965 from the library to City Hall. In 1986, structural stabilizers for seismic safety were implemented by reinforcing the floors and tying the roof to the iron along the side walls. The structure lacks modern police department facilities, such as a secure lobby, accessible restrooms and parking, evidence rooms of significant size, offices, storage, and internal security storage and locker rooms. This facility, being outdated and undersized, no longer meets the department's operational needs or the city's growing needs.

ANALYSIS:

General Plan

Currently, the subject property is designated both High Density Residential (HDR) and Mixed Use (MU) on the 2007 General Plan Diagram, with MU along the site frontage and HDR on the balance of the property. HDR designations allow apartments, condominiums, and townhomes at a density of 12 to 20 units per acre. The MU designation provides for relatively high-intensity development with the intent to emphasize a mix of land uses, specifically tailored to its respective locations, generally providing a pedestrian-oriented live/work/play environment.

The change to Public Facilities (PF) is a land use designation applicable to activities that serve the public benefit. This designation provides for a full range of public and private facilities throughout the City, including City Hall, Colusa County offices, the library, and the post office. The designation is also used for school facilities, the hospital, the cemetery, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

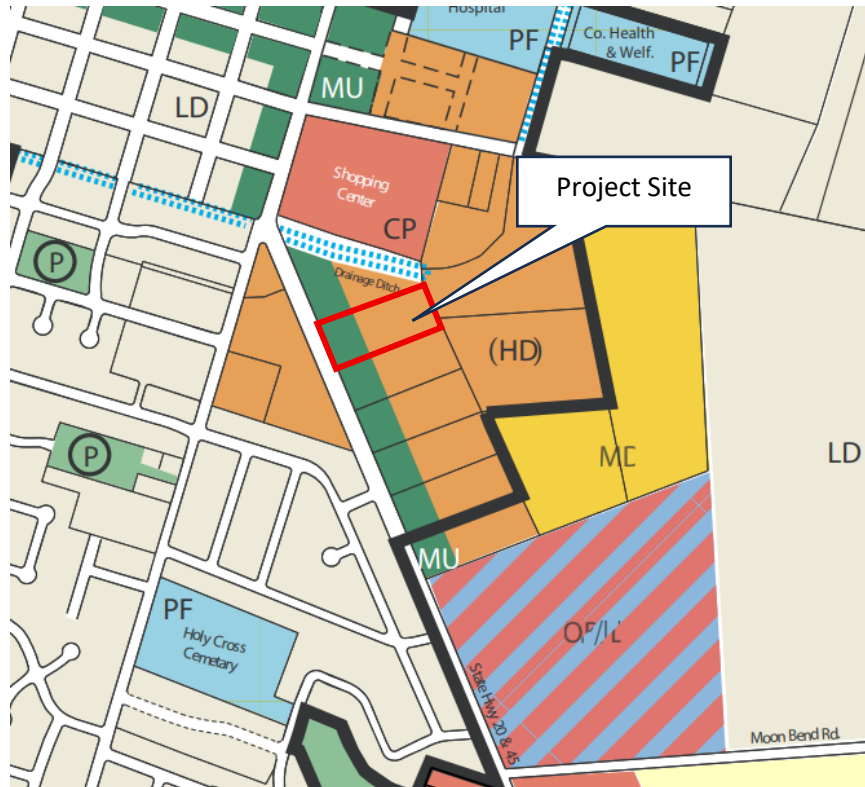


Image: Portion of the 2007 General Plan Diagram, with Mixed Use designation noted in Green and High-Density designation in Orange.

Rezone

The property is currently split-zoned, with the M-U-B Mixed Use Bridge Street zone along SR 20, while the balance of the site is in the R-4 General Apartment zone on the eastern portion.

The proposed zoning district would be P-F Public Facilities District, which would permit a Public Safety Facilities – Police Station by right pursuant to Appendix A – Zoning, Article 16 – P-F Public Facilities District Regulations.

Site Review

In addition to the General Plan Amendment and Rezone, the project contains the development of an approximately 11,707-square-foot Police Station and supporting improvements, including a parking lot, landscaping, lighting, security fencing, and secure storage.

The site design allows police officers and other personnel to access the site via the main vehicle entrance, pass by the structure, and approach a secure gate leading to a rear parking lot, which then provides access to the back of the structure. This secure parking lot would allow police staff to escort individuals to/from the structure and vehicles while also securely handling evidence out of public view.

The facility is designed with two vehicle access points, which would allow safe and efficient accommodation for distinctly different functions associated with public and police operational traffic, deliveries, administrative staff, and general day-to-day access. A secondary driveway,

designated as “out only,” would be dedicated to police operational vehicles exiting the site. Separating these traffic streams in accordance with acceptable public safety facilities design practices reduces conflicts between civilian vehicles and emergency response vehicles, improves internal circulation and site security, minimizes delays in officers responding to emergencies, and enhances pedestrian and public safety near public parking and building entrances.

The structure would include square footage dedicated to a variety of uses, including a public lobby and live scan room, administrative space and offices, storage rooms and lockers, training facilities, wellness space, conference room, and supporting facilities such as a fitness center, janitorial, mechanical, and electrical rooms, etc.

The structure is also designed to include an indoor shooting range in a sound-damping room, with modern safety measures to prevent ballistic material from escaping the space and proper ventilation. Dampening would include high-density construction materials finished with soundproofing products, acoustic panels, hanging baffles, soundproofing barriers, and composites. At the same time, ballistic containment would be constructed from materials such as steel, rubber, and concrete to prevent bullets from ricocheting or penetrating walls. This includes firing-lane barriers and backstops designed to absorb projectiles effectively. Ventilation systems would be designed to remove harmful airborne particles, such as lead and gunpowder residue.

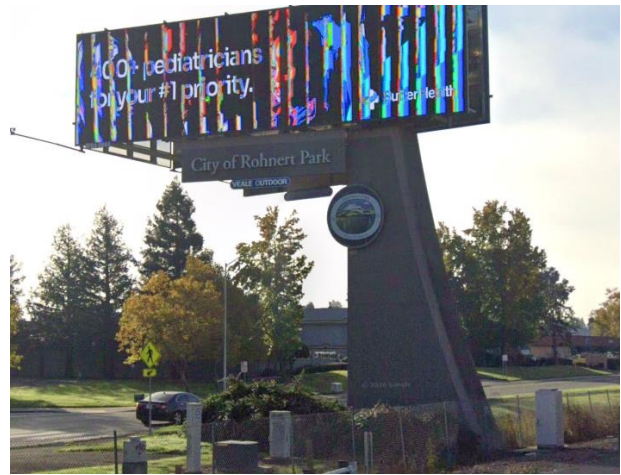
The specific design of the structure is not known at this time, as the consultant has prepared conceptual designs that can be utilized or modified based on budgetary constraints (See **Attachment A, Preliminary Site Plan and Elevations**).

Billboards

In addition to the new police facility, the project involves converting two static billboards at the southwest corner into electronic (digital) billboards.

Electronic billboards are primarily high-efficiency LED fixtures. Current display technology enables light control and modern control. Light and modern controls allow adjustments to mount and beam angles and support direct-light efficiency, brightness limits, and automatic brightness controls that adjust to ambient light levels. These controls also allow photocell sensors to adjust to dusk-to-dawn operation automatically.

Given the sign's location, it could double as a gateway or a welcome feature for the city. The design could also be designed to hide the billboard's structural support. Copy space could be leased to local and national brands, as well as to advertise city events and emergencies.



Examples of signs that include branding of the local jurisdiction and architectural elements.

Colusa County Airport Land Use Commission

On May 4, 2025, the Colusa County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) reviewed the entire proposal, including the General Plan amendment, Rezone, site review, and electronic billboards, and found the project to comply with the 2014 Colusa County Airport Land Use.

GENERAL PLAN

The entire property will receive a Public Facilities designation, and the following General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions apply to the overall project:

Goal LU-5: To ensure growth occurs in an orderly, compact, and efficient manner, so that municipal services and infrastructure can be extended at the least possible cost.

Policy LU-6.3: Growth shall be managed to ensure that adequate public facilities and services are planned for and provided in a manner that protects the public's health, safety, and welfare.

Goal MFS – 1: To provide civic, community, and maintenance facilities for both new development and existing residents and businesses at a level that will maintain and improve the standard of living for the entire community.

Goal MFS – 2: To provide and maintain acceptable police protection facilities.

Policy MFS-2.1: The City shall maintain acceptable law enforcement services for City residents and businesses through the provision of adequate facilities and equipment.

Policy MFS-2.2: The City shall require that the construction and staffing of police facilities be scheduled such that they are ready to serve new development as it occurs.

Goal SAF-6: To provide police and emergency medical services in a well-planned, cost-effective, and professional manners.

Policy SAF-6.1: The City shall strive to provide high-quality police services for City residents and businesses with adequate facilities, modern technology, and current training to maximize job performance.

Policy SAF-6.4: The City shall strive to maintain its quick response time for emergency medical calls.

Goal SAF-8: To ensure a coordinated and effective response to emergencies affecting the City.

FINDINGS

The findings required for approval of the Project are outlined in the attached resolutions and ordinances and are incorporated herein by reference.

PUBLIC CONTACT

On July 17, 2026, a 20-day public hearing notice was mailed to all landowners within 300 feet of the project boundary, and a legal notice was published in the Pioneer Review. Notices were placed at City Hall and also made available on the city's website at <https://cityofcolusa.com/public-notices/>. Tribal Consultation was completed in compliance with AB 52 and SB18 as part of the California Environmental Quality Act review. Based on the results of an Initial Study, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH Number 2026061002) was prepared for the project. As of the date of this report, staff have not received any inquiries or comments from the public. Due to the size of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration document, it is available for review at <https://cityofcolusa.com/public-notices/>

BUDGET IMPACT: Grants and other funding sources will need to be identified and secured to fund the project's physical development.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Preliminary Elevation and Site Plan
- B. Planning Commission Resolution 26-03
Exhibit I – Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program (MMRP)
- C. Planning Commission Resolution 26-04
- D. City Council Resolution
Exhibit I – Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program (MMRP)
- E. City Council Resolution
Exhibit I – General Plan Amendment
- F. City Council Resolution
Exhibit I – General Plan Amendment Diagram
- G. Ordinance – Rezoning
Exhibit I – Zoning Map
- H. City Council Resolution
Exhibit I – Site Plan Review