



CITY OF ARCATA • CITY OF FORTUNA • CITY OF RIO DELL
Humboldt County, California

August 24, 2026

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Joint Letter of Support for Designation of Census Tracts 06023001001 (Arcata), 06023010901 (Fortuna), and 06023011100 (Rio Dell) as California Opportunity Zones 2.0

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the cities of Arcata, Fortuna, and Rio Dell, we write jointly to express our strong concurrence with the California Department of Finance's draft recommendation to nominate the following census tracts for designation as Opportunity Zones under the federal Opportunity Zones 2.0 program, and to respectfully request that your office include all three tracts in the State's final nomination submitted to the U.S. Department of the Treasury:

City	Census Tract	County
Arcata	06023001001	Humboldt
Fortuna	06023010901	Humboldt
Rio Dell	06023011100	Humboldt

Each of our three census tracts meets the federal eligibility criteria for Opportunity Zones 2.0 designation, and each represents a community with a genuine and demonstrated need for the long-term, patient capital investment this program is designed to attract. While each city brings a distinct set of circumstances, we share a common interest in the economic revitalization of the greater Humboldt County region, and we believe the case for all three designations is strengthened when presented together.

Arcata's designated tract encompasses the city's downtown core, the economic, cultural, and civic heart of the community. The area is well positioned to benefit from reinvestment in mixed-use development, housing, small business growth, and critical downtown infrastructure. The tract also

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includes properties impacted by the January 2, 2026, fire for which Governor Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency.

Fortuna's designated tract reflects the city's ongoing efforts to repurpose and revitalize its core commercial and residential areas amid a declining population base and a poverty rate well above state and national averages. OZ designation would materially support the city's General Plan Update and broader economic development priorities, and further leverage several existing local and state infrastructure investments including the Great Redwood Trail.

Rio Dell's designated tract includes a community still recovering from the December 2022 Ferndale earthquake, which damaged an estimated 25 percent of the city's building stock yet was never federally declared as a disaster. OZ designation would provide a meaningful tool to attract the private capital needed to accelerate that recovery and build on recent infrastructure and capacity investments made by the city and state, including the new \$57.4 million CAL FIRE regional headquarters.

Humboldt County's rural communities face persistent structural economic challenges, including limited access to capital markets, an aging building stock, and a shrinking working-age population. The Opportunity Zones 2.0 program offers one of the few federal tools capable of directing private investment to communities like ours at the scale needed to make a difference. We respectfully urge that the State's final nomination reflect the draft recommendation and include all three census tracts identified above.

We appreciate the Administration's work to develop a thoughtful and data-driven draft recommendation, and we appreciate the opportunity to formally concur in that recommendation on the record during the public comment period. Should you or your staff have any questions or require additional information from any of our three cities, please do not hesitate to contact any of the undersigned or our respective city managers.

Respectfully,

Kimberley White
Mayor, City of Arcata

Mike Johnson
Mayor, City of Fortuna

Debra Garnes
Mayor, City of Rio Dell

cc:

California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)
California Department of Finance, OZ 2.0 Public Comment Portal
City Managers of Arcata, Fortuna and Rio Dell

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