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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Rio Dell Announces Inclusion in Opportunity Zone 2.0 Designation

RIO DELL, Calif. — November 4, 2026 — The City of Rio Dell is pleased to announce that the U.S. Department of the Treasury has certified the Rio Dell census tract (06023011100) as an Opportunity Zone 2.0 (OZ 2.0) location. The tract is one of 620 California census tracts nominated by Governor Newsom and certified under the renewed federal Opportunity Zones program.

"This designation gives Rio Dell a real tool to bring private investment to our community," said Mayor Debra Garnes. "We worked hard to make the case for this tract, and we couldn't have done it without the community members, businesses and organizations who wrote letters of support, and our regional partners. Now the work turns to connecting investors with projects that bring housing, jobs and new businesses to town."

Originally established under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the federal Opportunity Zone program encourages private investors, developers and financial institutions to reinvest eligible capital gains into underserved and rural communities. Federal legislation enacted in July 2025 permanently authorized the initiative as Opportunity Zone 2.0, refining program guidelines while expanding targeted incentives. Under the updated framework, qualifying investments through rural Opportunity Zone funds receive an enhanced incentive — including a 30 percent basis step-up after five years — designed to unlock private capital for projects such as workforce housing, commercial and industrial expansion, and community infrastructure.

The City's application was supported by letters from a broad range of partners, including but not limited to: Congressman Jared Huffman, U.S. Senator Adam Schiff, State Senator Mike McGuire, Assemblymember Damon Connolly, Assemblymember Chris Rogers, Humboldt Trails Council, Humboldt Builders Exchange, Friends of the Eel River, Wahlund Construction, Rio Dell Community Resource Center (Providence), The Danco Group, GHD, Humboldt Transit Authority, Humboldt Association of Realtors, Department of Initiatives at Cal Poly Humboldt, Mobley Construction, Redwood Region Economic Development Commission and a joint advocacy letter in cooperation with the cities of Fortuna and Arcata.

Rio Dell's census tract is one of six tracts selected in Humboldt County; statewide, certified tracts span 55 counties.

"This designation can truly be the 'opportunity' Rio Dell has been waiting for. Bringing investors in will ultimately bring in revenue and jobs; and that will lead directly to making Rio Dell, stronger, safer and more resilient." concluded Mayor Garnes.

The OZ 2.0 designations take effect January 1, 2027, and remain active through December 31, 2036. Existing OZ 1.0 designations remain in effect through December 31, 2028.

To view designated tract maps and the full list of certified California tracts, visit the California Department of Finance Opportunity Zones page. The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) will announce dates for an Opportunity Zones 2.0 investment and community-readiness webinar series on its Opportunity Zones webpage. Investors and property owners interested in opportunities in Rio Dell are encouraged to contact the City.

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