



STAFF REPORT – PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

TO: Honorable Chair and Commissioners

FROM: David Loya, Director of Community Development

PREPARER: Mari Pepper, Program Specialist

DATE: April 28, 2026

TITLE: **Find the 2026 Updates to the Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act and Consistent with the General Plan**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning Commission: 1) receive a staff report; 2) accept public comment; 3) make the finding that the Capital Improvements Program is not considered a “project” under CEQA; 4) consider the new projects proposed for the Capital Improvement Program Fiscal Year 2026/2027; and 5) adopt Resolution No. PC-26-02 finding the new projects proposed for the Capital Improvement Program Fiscal Year 2026/2027 are consistent with the Arcata General Plan 2045.

INTRODUCTION:

The City of Arcata Capital Improvement Program (CIP) includes a variety of near- and long-term projects to address the City’s infrastructure needs. Through the CIP, the City systematically plans, schedules, and finances capital projects. The Planning Commission is charged with ensuring that City-adopted plans are consistent with goals and policies of the adopted General Plan 2045 pursuant to California Government Code, Section 65403. In preparation for the 2026/2027 budget process, staff identified seven new CIP projects that require consideration and recommendation from the Commission. The Commission’s adoption of Resolution PC-26-02 would confirm the CIP consistency with the General Plan 2045.

BACKGROUND:

By adopting and implementing a CIP, the City is proactively addressing the City’s long-term needs for major capital improvements. This includes upgrading and maintaining aging facilities to continue providing high quality services in our community. The approval of the CIP also allows the City to seek necessary long-term financing for CIP projects that require major capital expenditures. Resolution PC 26-02 (Attachment A, Exhibit 1) focuses exclusively on seven new projects proposed for the 2026/2027 fiscal year and their consistency with the General Plan 2045.

The Commission previously found CIP updates consistent with General Plan 2045 policies (Attachment A, Exhibit 2).

DISCUSSION:

Resolution PC-26-02 (Attachment A) lists the Summary Schedule for the Proposed CIP Fiscal Year 2026/27 that requires Commission General Plan conformance review. The Commission will affirm through this action that both the new projects under consideration and those previously found consistent are still consistent with the General Plan 2045. The full CIP list, including recently completed projects is available for Commission review (Attachment B), however, the Commission is not taking action on this list, which was previously considered.

The Council will be asked at a future meeting to adopt the CIP for fiscal year 2026/27 with the approval of the City's annual budget. It is timely for the Commission to consider the new projects proposed for the CIP for General Plan conformance.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

The Commission is charged with ensuring that City-adopted plans are consistent with goals and policies of the adopted General Plan [California Government Code, Section 65401].

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REVIEW:

Each respective Committee engages in the CIP process during the planning and implementation of projects. These include but are not limited to Transportation Safety Committee, Park and Recreation Committee, Economic Development Committee, Forest Management Committee and so forth.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA):

Finding the CIP in conformance with the General Plan is not a project pursuant to Section 15378.2 of the CEQA Guidelines. Each project listed, if funded, will undergo its own CEQA analysis. At this stage in planning the projects, they are too conceptual to analyze. Certifying the CIP is consistent with the General Plan is not a project pursuant to CEQA.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:

The action by Commission allows the CIP to advance to City Council for final approval and budget authority. The Council may approve budget allocation, or direct staff to seek grant funding or financing as appropriate for each project.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Resolution No. PC-26-02
- B. New-Current-Old CIP 2026-27