

AGENDA
CITY OF FERNDALE – HUMBOLDT COUNTY CALIFORNIA – U.S.A.
DRAINAGE COMMITTEE MEETING

Location:	Ferndale City Hall	Date:	August 6, 2026
	834 Main Street	Time:	2:30 pm
	Ferndale, CA 95536	Posted:	August 3, 2026

We welcome you to the meeting. Members of the Public may be heard on any business item on this Agenda during the Drainage Committee consideration of the item. The public may also directly address the Committee on any item of interest to the public that is not on the Agenda during the public comment time; however, the Committee generally cannot take action on an item not on the agenda.

A person addressing the Committee will be limited to five (5) minutes unless the Chair of the Committee grants a longer period. While not required, we would appreciate it if you would identify yourself with your name when addressing the Committee.

This City endeavors to be ADA compliant. Should you require assistance with written information or access to the facility, or a hearing amplification, please call 786-4224 24 hours prior to the meeting.

TO SPEAK ON ANY ISSUE, BE ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE CHAIR BEFORE PROCEEDING TO THE PODIUM, STATE YOUR NAME FOR THE RECORD (optional), AND DIRECT YOUR COMMENTS ONLY TO THE COMMITTEE.

1. CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRMAN
2. ROLL CALL – PHILLIP OSTLER, JAMES BASS, BILL BECKER, WAYNE AMBROSINI, MICHAEL SWEENEY, AND JOHN MAXWELL
3. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –Minutes of the April 2, 2026, Drainage Meeting
5. PUBLIC COMMENT. *(This time is for persons who wish to address the Committee on any matter not on this agenda and over which the Committee has jurisdiction - Drainage. Items requiring action not listed on this agenda will be placed on the next regular agenda for consideration, unless a finding is made by at least 2/3rds of the Committee that the item came up after the agenda was posted and is of an urgent nature requiring immediate action.*
6. BUSINESS
 - A. Selection of Chair/Vice Chair
 - B. Update of Committee Member expiring terms
 - C. Update on Lake Christie Acquisition
 - D. Discuss Francis Creek Annual Walk
 - E. Update on Van Ness Gauging Station
7. CORRESPONDENCE
8. COMMENTS
8. ADJOURN

**The next regular meeting of the Ferndale Drainage Committee will be on
 October 1, 2026**

MINUTES**CITY OF FERNDALE – HUMBOLDT COUNTY U.S.A.****DRAINAGE COMMITTEE MEETING****Minutes**

April 2, 2026

Chair Tom Stephens opened the meeting at 2:30 pm. Those present were Tom Stephens, John Maxwell, Wayne Ambrosini, Michael Sweeney, Bill Becker, Councilman Philip Ostler, City Manager Kristene Hall, City Engineer Brian Ontiveros, and Deputy City Clerk Lauren Boop

MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Approval of December 4th, 2025 Meeting Minutes with the correction that Bill Becker was present at the meeting. **(Becker/Ostler)** Unanimous

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BUSINESS:

A. Discuss Drainage Assessment Fees

City Manager Hall presented the committee with a report from City Attorney Ryan Plotz outlining options for re-assessing drainages fees in the city. Option 4 was recommended by staff which would be for the Drainage Committee to first make a motion to recommend to council that the city move forward with a Prop 218 Engineering Assessment and let them vote to move it forward. The assessment was estimated a few years ago to cost between \$15,000 - \$20,000. Discussion was had regarding options and limitations to process. City Engineer Brian Ontiveros outlined the process of bidding and acquiring an engineering firm to do the assessment. Manager Hall expressed some doubt in community support for raising rates due to the current economic conditions. She offered to approach each council member to see if there is a majority of City Council support to have a joint study session with the Drainage Committee to discuss options for raising rates, probably in August/September.

B. Discuss Lake Christie Acquisition & Appoint two Members to Research

The committee talked about current status of parcel, which is unknown. The committee agreed that 2 members needed to take on the role of researching options for acquisition including an LLA that would divide the land into buildable and non-buildable parcels and possibly get a tax write off by donating the unbuildable land to the city to develop as a Wetland Conservation area. It was agreed that Chair Tom Stephens and Member Michael Sweeney would attempt researching.

MOTION: To appoint Chair Tom Stephens and Member Michael Sweeney to lead research into acquisition of the Lake Christie Property.

(Becker/Ostler) Unanimous

C. Recent Storm Activity

The February storm event brought some high levels at the bridge and also Francis Creek. Chair Tom Stephens noted that the Francis Creek Gauging Station run by CalPoly Humboldt was operational but not yet available to the public. Member John Maxwell noted that the February storm brought the highest level of flooding he had ever seen on his property and noted that his neighbors shared that perspective.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

COMMENTS: Manager Hall noted that residents on Francis Street have reported better conditions since the Wildcat was repaired. She also gave the committee an update on the Drainage Improvement Grant.

ADJOURN: Chair Tom Stephens adjourned the meeting at 3:28 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Deputy City Clerk Lauren Boop

CITY OF FERNDALE

POB 1095

FERNDALE, CA 95536

"A Historic Victorian Village"

May 20, 2022

Coastal Conservancy

Via Email: morgan.wright@scc.ca.gov

RE: Letter of Interest for the US Fish & Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Conservation
Brant Program FY2027

To Whom it May Concern,

The City of Ferndale has proposed to a willing seller the purchase of a seasonal coastal wetland at the downstream end of the City's east side drainage system for purposes of enhancing wetland habitat and downstream habitat for Chinook salmon, coho salmon, sea-run cutthroat trout and steelhead trout. Currently, the property in question serves as a detention facility during peak winter flows while improving water quality. The property has been used for seasonal cattle grazing historically. This area drains to Francis Creek, to the Salt River, and then to the Eel River.

The proposed Eastside Wetland Restoration Project is in Ferndale, Humboldt County, California. The project addresses the NCWC grant coastal wetland restoration goals of acquisition of real property interest in coastal lands or waters and the restoration, enhancement, or management of coastal wetlands ecosystems.

The need for the project is multi-faceted. During peak winter flows, four land parcels south of Ambrosini Lane typically fill up with water forming a seasonal lake which later transitions to a wetland landscape as seasonal rainfall is diminished. This area serves multiple purposes for the City of Ferndale: detention of downstream flows during heavy rain; improving water quality through "bioremediation" of stormwater mainly from roads and streets that includes toxins; improving downstream habitat for Chinook salmon, coho salmon, sea-run cutthroat trout and steelhead trout; providing wetland habitat for migratory waterfowl, wading birds, red-winged black birds, cowbirds, among others and provides homes for numerous water-dependent species such as frogs and salamanders. The site offers forage habitat for numerous raptors including Northern Harrier, Red-shouldered hawk, White tailed kite, Cooper's hawk, Sharp-shinned hawk, Red-tailed hawk, Osprey and Peregrine falcon.

Annual nesting of both waterfowl and numerous bird species has been observed. No jurisdictional wetland delineation has occurred for this site, but it undoubtedly meets the federal jurisdictional requirements of hydric soils, hydric vegetation, and presence of water.

The primary purpose of the project is acquisition of four parcels which are currently under private ownership to preserve the existing function of these parcels as a stormwater detention/filtration pond to protect downstream flooding, improve water quality for downstream anadromous fish, and maintain existing wetland habitat for waterfowl, wading birds, and other wetland-dependent species. Future improvements would focus on enhancing the wetland ecology by introducing appropriate wetland plant species and other means of filtering toxic stormwater runoff.

Currently, the owner of the project site has expressed a willingness to sell the four main parcels with the City General Plan Land Use element and zoning designation of AE (Agriculture Exclusive). The quoted price for this acquisition would be about \$500,000. The match would likely come from in kind services as Ferndale has a limited budget and classifies as a disadvantaged community. Possible in-kind services may include amending the Land Use Designation and zoning to PF (Public Facility) or NR (Natural Resources) and environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The local Wyot tribe may be interested in contributing to the match. Other sources of funding will also be investigated as a possible match.

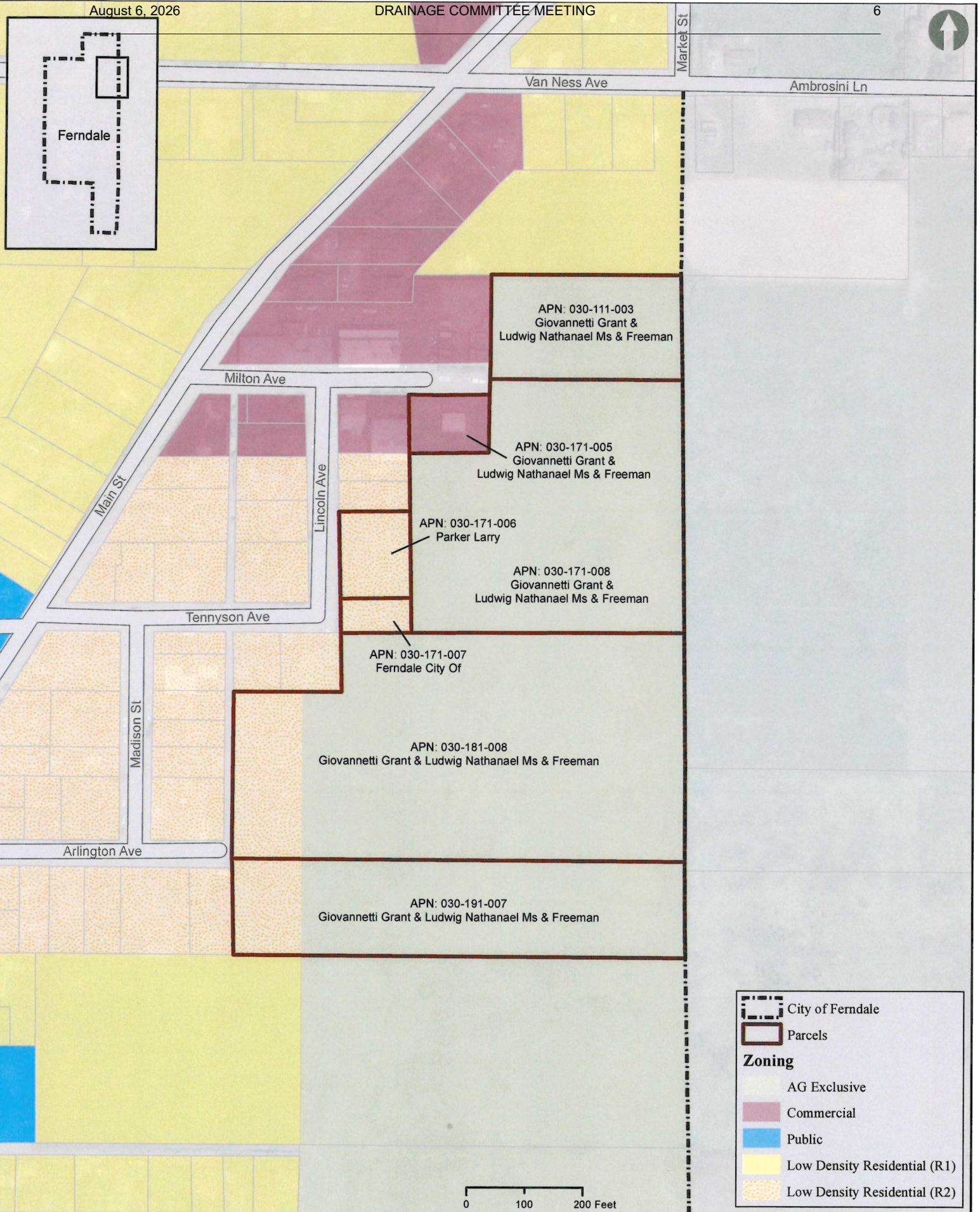
The timeline for the project would be approximately 18 months. At this point in time there would be no need for “project design” as the affected parcels already serve the project purpose. Amendments to the Land Use Element and zoning code from AE to PF or NR would follow City amendment protocol. The City would prepare an Initial Study under CEQA and approve a Categorical Exemptions or Negative Declaration.

Potential partners for the proposed project would include the Wiyot Tribe, the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, CalTrout, Trout Unlimited, California Ducks Unlimited, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The approximate acreage of the project area and acreage of coastal wetlands within the project area is 13 acres. The following map illustrates the 4 parcels that comprise the project area to include all of parcels APN: 030-111-003, APN: 030-171-008, and portions of parcels APN: 030-181-008, and APN: 030-191-007.

Thank you for your consideration of the City of Ferndale’s proposed project.



Kristene Hall
City Manager
City of Ferndale



City of Ferndale

Christie Property Parcels

CITY OF FERNDALE

POB 1095

FERNDALE, CA 95536

"A Historic Victorian Village"

July 29, 2026

«Name»

«Address»

«City»

RE:«Situs_Address»

Pursuant to City of Ferndale Ordinance No. 97-02, the City of Ferndale has completed its annual inspection of Francis Creek and identified and marked vegetation and debris that must be removed during the August maintenance period. If you have vegetation and/or debris that is marked and requires removal from your portion of the creek, volunteer assistance is available.

A dedicated group of community volunteers has once again offered to assist property owners with the annual Francis Creek cleanup. Beginning **August 11, 2026**, volunteers equipped with the necessary tools will remove eligible vegetation and debris from the creek channel for property owners who may be unable to complete the work themselves.

Please note the following important limitations:

- Volunteer work is limited to the removal of vegetation and debris only.
- Removal of large trees, stumps, root systems, or other materials requiring heavy equipment remains the responsibility of the property owner.
- No excavation, grading, or other earth movement within the creek channel is permitted under the City's California Department of Fish and Wildlife permit.
- Volunteers will not perform work beyond what is authorized under the City's permitted allowance through California Department of Fish & Wildlife.

If you would like to receive this volunteer assistance, **no action is required**. Volunteers will begin work on **August 11, 2026**.

If you **do not** want volunteers to enter your property to perform this maintenance, please notify City Hall as soon as possible by calling **(707) 786-4224** before August 11, 2026. **If you do not utilize the volunteer service or the debris removal is too large for volunteers, you will be required to perform the maintenance. Maintenance must be performed between August 1st – August 31st.**

Please be aware that vegetation and debris removed from the creek channel will be placed on the upper bank of your property. **Removal and disposal of this material from your property remains the responsibility of the property owner.**

By allowing volunteers to enter your property, you acknowledge that the work is being performed by community volunteers. The City of Ferndale does not guarantee the condition of your property following the work and assumes no responsibility for pre-existing conditions, hidden hazards, or conditions outside the scope of the authorized vegetation and debris removal. The City reserves the right to suspend or discontinue work at any time if conditions are determined to be unsafe or outside the scope of the volunteer program.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping maintain Francis Creek as an effective waterway and reducing the risk of flooding throughout our community. We appreciate your partnership in keeping our creek clean, safe, and functioning properly.

Thank you for helping keep Francis Creek flowing!