



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060-4073

(831)454-2000 | www.santacruzcountyca.gov

Nicole D. Coburn, County Executive Officer

News Release

Date: January 2, 2026

Contact: Jason Hoppin

Jason.Hoppin@santacruzcounty.us

UPDATED DRAFT BESS ORDINANCE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

The County of Santa Cruz has released an updated draft ordinance regulating the siting and development of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) for public review, which will be considered by the Board of Supervisors at the January 13, 2026 meeting.

The proposed ordinance is designed to maintain local control over the siting, design and operation of such systems to maximize public safety, enhance environmental protection and assure community compatibility. To read the updated ordinance, which includes suggested additions based on feedback from Board members and members of the public during the Board's Nov. 18, 2025 meeting, please visit:

<https://cdi.santacruzcountyca.gov/UPC/GetInvolved/MajorProjectApplications/BatteryEnergyStorageSystemsOrdinance.aspx>

A local ordinance seeks to balance the need for renewable energy storage infrastructure to meet the County's green energy goals, improve grid resiliency, reduce blackouts and address climate change with the County's commitment to public safety, land use compatibility, and environmental stewardship. The draft is the culmination of more than a year of careful planning and consideration.

Before finalization, the ordinance would undergo environmental review and be reviewed by the Board of Supervisors and several advisory bodies including the Planning Commission, providing ample opportunity for public input.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY | WORKING FOR THE FUTURE

