



# COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

## DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 28, 2025

**FROM:** Planning & Building Services Staff

**SUBJECT:** OUTLINE OF OPTIONS FOR WILLIAMSON ACT TERMINATION

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The Mendocino County Policies and Procedures for Agricultural Preserves and Williamson Act Contracts (Policies & Procedures, or simply P&P) provides several options for property owners who want to terminate an existing Williamson Act contract. This memo provides a very brief outline of these processes for guidance. Please refer to the P&P for more detailed information.

**1) Nonrenewal (P&P §10.3(A))**

- a. The landowner shall file an application with the Clerk of the Board (Clerk) prior to September 1<sup>st</sup> of any given year.
- b. The Clerk shall record the Notice of Nonrenewal with the County Recorder.
- c. The Nonrenewal shall become effective January 1<sup>st</sup> and run for a period of nine years or until the contract is fully rescinded.

**2) Partial Nonrenewal (§10.3(B))**

- a. The landowner shall file an application with the Clerk.
- b. The Clerk shall transmit the application to Planning & Building Services (PBS) for review. PBS shall prepare a report and schedule the application for review by the Board of Supervisors (Board).
- c. If approved by the Board, the Clerk shall record the Notice of Partial Nonrenewal.

**3) Cancellation (§10.4)**

- a. The landowner shall file an application with PBS for cancellation of all or part of a contract.
- b. The landowner shall simultaneously file an application for Nonrenewal with the Clerk, who shall execute it as noted in item 1 above.
- c. PBS shall prepare a report and schedule the application for review by the Board.
- d. In order to approve the cancellation, the Board must be able to make the following findings:
  - i. A notice of Nonrenewal has been filed for the property in question.
  - ii. Cancellation is not likely to result in the removal of adjacent lands from agricultural use.
  - iii. Cancellation is for an alternative use which is consistent with the General Plan.
  - iv. Cancellation will not result in discontinuous patterns of urban development.
  - v. There is no proximate, noncontracted land which is suitable for the proposed use.
  - vi. Payment of a penalty fee equal to 12.5% of the current, unrestricted value of the property being cancelled must be made by the property owner to the Mendocino County Treasurer, for transmission to the State Controller's Office.
- e. If approved, the Clerk shall record a Final Certificate of Cancellation and transmit a copy to the State Department of Conservation.