



City of Santa Barbara California

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 2, 2020
TO: Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan Subcommittee
FROM: Melissa Hetrick, Project Planner
SUBJECT: Final Draft Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan and Draft Recommendation to Council

FINAL DRAFT SEA-LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION PLAN

City staff and Environmental Science Associates have revised the Draft Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan (Adaptation Plan) in response to comments from the public and the Subcommittee. The [Final Draft Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan](#) and associated [Executive Summary](#) are available for review at the following link: <https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/gov/brdcomm/nz/slr/working.asp>.

The major changes to the Draft Adaptation Plan are as follows:

- Addition of Section 11 Socioeconomic Analysis.
- Addition of information from previous vulnerability assessments, including photos of historic flooding and erosion events in Santa Barbara.
- Further information on how much sea-levels have already risen and how that relates to the State's sea-level rise projections.
- Clarification of the effectiveness of groins along the City's coastal bluffs.
- Changes to Guiding Principles, including multiple additions to Guiding Principle #5.
- Addition of near-term actions recommending analysis in the future of: socioeconomic costs and benefits of adaptation actions; impacts to groundwater contamination; potential incentives for voluntary and proactive resilience measures; and creek setbacks that factor in the impacts of sea-level rise.
- Changes to the recommended time period for reevaluation of the Adaptation Plan to "approximately every five to ten years in response to substantive new information, including major updates to the State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance."
- Identification of the following near-term actions as being the highest priority for the next few years:
 - Develop and implement a Shoreline Monitoring Program in collaboration with regional, state, and federal partners.
 - Update the City's Hazard Mitigation Program to incorporate risks associated with sea-level rise and potential adaptation projects so that these projects are available for federal hazard mitigation funding.

- Study and implement a redesign of Laguna tide gate and pump system that factors in potential changes in extreme rainfall runoff and creek discharge flooding in Laguna Channel with climate change and sea-level rise.
- Study and implement, as needed, options for relocation and/or flood proofing of major wastewater, water, and utility lines and infrastructure south of Cabrillo Boulevard.
- Study and implement options to optimize and expand existing sand bypassing, beach nourishment, and sand berm or dune projects at City beaches including East Beach, Leadbetter Beach, and Arroyo Burro Beach.
- Study and implement raising or otherwise modifying the Harbor breakwater, rock groin, sandspit, and the walkway and wall spanning from the breakwater to the Harbor commercial area.
- Raise and renovate marina facilities and the City Pier in phases.
- Study appropriate triggers for temporarily closing Stearns Warf during hazardous storm events and other potential safety measures that may be needed in the near- and mid-term.

In addition, staff have revised the Near-Term Actions and Next Steps section of the Executive Summary and Section 14 of the Draft Adaptation Plan to include the following recommendations from the Subcommittee on future implementation of the Adaptation Plan:

- The City’s Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Program should include a robust public information and engagement component, with all data, studies, actions, and processes being as publicly transparent as possible.
- Moving forward all projects proposed near the potential hazard areas outlined in the Adaption Plan should be developed with consideration for how they affect or may be impacted by the phased sea-level rise adaptation approach presented in the plan.
- While each department of the City can undertake the adaptation projects specific to their area of expertise, there is a need for a central staff team to coordinate the Adaptation Program. This coordination could include leading studies, developing the Shoreline Monitoring Program, developing a five-year implementation plan, tracking funding, sharing relevant information, and conducting public education and outreach.

No edits have been made to the appendices to the Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan.

DRAFT SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

On November 18th the Subcommittee discussed what should be included in the Subcommittee’s recommendation to City Council on the Adaptation Plan. Based on that discussion, staff has prepared the following draft recommendation for Subcommittee consideration at the December 9th meeting:

The Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan Subcommittee recommends that:

1. City Council approve a resolution to:

- a. Adopt the City of Santa Barbara Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan (Adaptation Plan).
 - b. Initiate a Local Coastal Program Amendment to update the City's Local Coastal Program as needed with current best available sea-level rise shoreline hazard information and other policy edits to implement the Adaptation Plan.
 - c. Begin implementation of the Adaptation Plan, including development of a Five-Year Implementation Plan and a Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Program. The City's Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Program should include a robust public information and engagement component, with all data, studies, actions, and processes being as publicly transparent as possible.
2. City Council commit funding necessary to implement the City's Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Program.