



Entrance Road to El Estero Water Resource Center

Wastewater and Water Systems Climate Adaptation Plan

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Santa Barbara has released its Draft Wastewater and Water Systems Climate Adaptation Plan (Plan) - the first of its kind in California. The Plan addresses how the City will protect critical wastewater and water infrastructure from increased flooding, sea level rise, and intensifying storms.

The largest risks to the wastewater and water systems include floodwater entering and overwhelming the sewer system, surrounding and limiting access to the El Estero Water Resource Center, and salt water from rising sea levels and coastal storm surges disrupting the wastewater treatment process.

The Plan identifies the highest-priority measures for the next 20 years to address these risks, which include sealing sewer manholes, rehabilitating flood-prone sewer lines, increasing sewer system capacity, and transitioning to a pressurized sewer system in flood-prone areas.

The Plan is part of the City's comprehensive Adaptation & Resilience Program, established to proactively prepare our community for climate-related hazards like sea level rise, flooding, erosion, and wildfire.

Staff collaborate across the City and region to monitor changing climate conditions and develop strategies to address current and future impacts in phases.

PUBLIC REVIEW

The Plan will be available for public review on December 9, 2025 at SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WWCAP. Public comments can be submitted to MHetrick@SantaBarbaraCA.gov through February 10, 2026.

The Plan will be presented to the Water Commission, Sustainability Council Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council before being finalized in May 2026.

FUNDING SOURCES

- California Coastal Commission
- California Coastal Conservancy
- City of Santa Barbara

PROJECT TEAM

- City of Santa Barbara Adaptation & Resilience Program, Public Works Department, and Department of Water Resources
- Water Systems Consulting, Inc.
- Environmental Science Associates

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LEARN MORE

For more information about this project, please visit SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WWCAP

For more information about the Adaptation & Resilience Program, visit SantaBarbaraCA.gov/Adaptation



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE DEPARTMENT

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