



Potential Waterfront Adaptation Options



The purpose of the Waterfront Adaptation Plan is to develop practical solutions to address coastal flooding and erosion for the next 30 years, while enhancing what makes the Waterfront special.

The City of Santa Barbara's Waterfront is a cherished community resource and cornerstone of the local economy. It faces growing challenges from beach erosion and flooding during major wave events, which are causing millions of dollars in damage, disrupting recreation and operations, and rapidly narrowing East Beach. As sea levels rise, these problems will get worse.

The City is evaluating adaptation options that prioritize sandy beaches and recreation, protect the harbor and inland areas, improve the experience, and provide continuous public access along the Waterfront. Some initial ideas include:

- Immediate “quick win” projects like temporary flood walls, minor drainage improvements, and restriping the Harbor West and Leadbetter parking lots to create a separated walking and biking path to improve safety.
- Strategically relocating some parking, restrooms, paths, park areas, and commercial facilities at Leadbetter and East Beach to allow the shoreline to naturally move inland and remain sandy. Options exist to phase relocations.
- Implementing additional beach nourishment, sand berms, and dunes to retain and enhance sandy beach areas.
- Improving stormwater drainage at West Beach to enhance sand quality and adding amenities such as restrooms and showers to establish West Beach as a premier sandy beach destination.
- Protecting the Harbor Commercial Area with a revetment that reduces flooding and erosion and is topped by a pedestrian promenade to expand public access.
- Exploring improvements to the Harbor Commercial Area and adjacent parking lots to expand boating support services, increase public access, support coastal uses, and add new economic development opportunities that generate revenue and support Plan implementation.
- Providing a safe, continuous, and separated walking and biking path along the entire Waterfront that is elevated to protect inland areas from ocean flooding.

The Plan will also analyze longer-term options that may be needed later and are more difficult to fund and permit, such as groins, headlands, and offshore reefs.

Timeline

- Outreach on Potential Options to Study Further: *March-May*
- Survey & Open Houses: *April & May*
- Draft Plan: *Early 2027*
- Council Adoption: *Spring 2027*

Learn More

Sign up for emails, find events, provide input, and learn more at: SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WaterfrontAdaptation

Funding

- Coastal Commission
- Coastal Conservancy
- City of Santa Barbara

Contact

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