



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: *Spring 2027*
- Council Adoption: *Late 2027*

Learn More

Sign up for emails, find events, provide input, and learn more at:

[SantaBarbaraCA.gov/
WaterfrontAdaptation](https://SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WaterfrontAdaptation)

Funding

- Coastal Commission
- Coastal Conservancy
- City of Santa Barbara

Contact

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Waterfront-Wide Goals & Priorities

Save the sandy beach and enhance recreation

Protect the working harbor

Protect inland areas from ocean flooding

Provide continuous separated walking and biking path



Leadbetter Beach

Harbor

West Beach

Stearns Wharf

East Beach

Leadbetter Potential Quick Wins:

Immediate safety & flooding fixes



- 1** Restripe first row of parking to a walking & biking path



- 2** Deployable flood proofing



- 3** Low wall next to new path



- 4** Convert unused area to parking

Leadbetter Potential Core Measures:

Keep sandy beach by moving things back

1



Move parks, paths, & assets inland to keep sandy beach

2



Raise path to limit flooding

3



Relocate when replacement facilities available or flood & erosion risk reach set limits



4



Relocate parking to new parking garages at existing surface lot

5



Improve stormwater drainage

Leadbetter Potential Future Options:

Larger projects for a wider beach & more protection



1

Keep sandy beach for longer by moving paths, parks, and facilities further inland



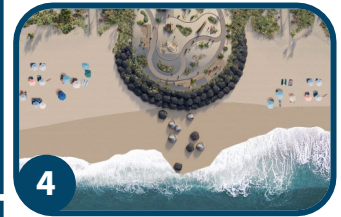
2

Raise path higher to reduce flood risk for higher sea levels



3

Space for park and relocated facilities



4

Headland at Harbor breakwater (not shown) with nourishment to widen beach

Harbor Potential Quick Wins:

Immediate safety & flooding fixes



1 Deployable flood proofing



2 Drainage improvements



3 Restripe first row of parking to a walking & biking path

Harbor Potential Core Measures:

Flood protection, prioritize public access & boating



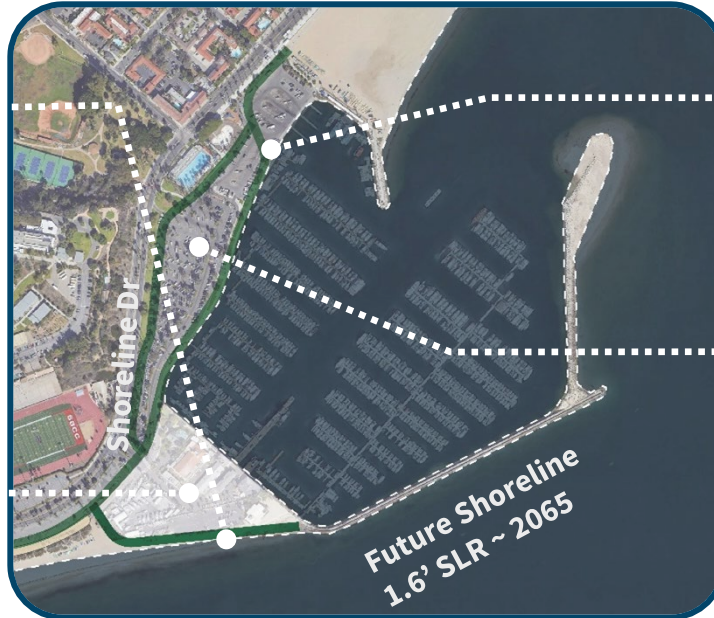
1

Pedestrian promenade on raised revetment for flood protection & better access



2

Protect & improve Harbor Commercial area for better public access & boating



3

Enhance & raise walking & biking paths for better access & flood protection



4

Explore converting some parking for economic development

Harbor Potential Future Options: *Further protection*



- 1** Raise all paths and edges for greater flood protection



- 2** Headland with beach nourishment to widen beach



- 3** Sand trap to protect harbor entrance



- 4** Wave screen to protect marinas

West Beach Potential Core Measures:

Premier sandy beach experience



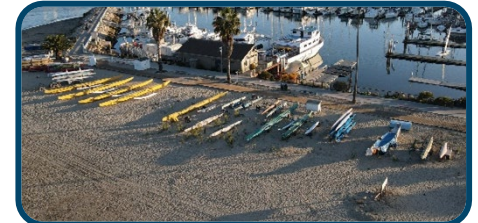
- 1 Relocate storm drain to improve sand quality



- 2 Add restrooms, showers, café, beach concessions



- 3 Raise walking & bike path with new adjacent park



- 4 Retain space for small boats, outriggers, tomols, etc.

East Beach Potential Core Measures:

Preserve as much sandy beach as possible & protect critical infrastructure



1

Keep sandy beach and park for as long as possible by moving parks, paths, & facilities inland



2

Raise & locate walking & biking path to protect Cabrillo Pavilion & inland areas



Future Shoreline 1.6' ~ 2065

East Beach Potential Future Options:

Additional, larger projects for wider beach & increased protection



Improve per future Laguna Flood Resilience Study



Potential site for additional parking



Raise path higher to reduce flood risk for higher sea levels

