

Capitola City Council

Agenda Report



Meeting: June 26, 2025

From: Public Works Department

Subject: Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Planning Grant

Recommended Action: Authorize staff to submit an application to the Ocean Protection Council's SB 1 Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Planning Grant Program.

Background: In 2017, the City completed its first Sea-Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment (VA) with funding from the Ocean Protection Council (OPC). That assessment provided an initial evaluation of Capitola's exposure to sea-level rise and coastal hazards. Since that time, the State of California has adopted updated sea-level rise guidance and expanded planning criteria, including specific requirements under Senate Bill 1 (SB 1, Atkins 2021).

SB 1 established a statewide Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Planning Grant Program administered by OPC. The program supports local governments in developing updated vulnerability assessments and adaptation plans, with an emphasis on equity, multi-sector analysis, and use of updated sea-level rise scenarios extending to 2150. The City's 2017 assessment pre-dates many of these requirements, and an update is needed to remain aligned with current State guidance.

In addition, the State requires jurisdictions within the coastal zone to adopt a sea-level rise adaptation plan by 2034. Completing this work will allow the City to remain in compliance with these requirements and better position Capitola for future project funding and implementation.

Discussion: Staff proposes submitting an application to the OPC SB 1 Grant Program to fund a comprehensive update of the 2017 vulnerability assessment, along with preparation of an adaptation plan that will integrate with the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP) update. Coordinating these efforts will help ensure consistency across City planning documents and support long-term climate resilience.

The proposed scope includes working with the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) to complete the technical vulnerability assessment and develop adaptation recommendations. UCSC's role would be incorporated directly into the grant application as a named subcontractor. The City would separately retain a consultant to prepare the adaptation plan itself, using the updated technical information generated by UCSC. That adaptation plan would be developed in tandem with the CAP update as part of a separate but parallel effort. Both plans will require robust public review, as well as City Council approval prior to being finalized.

As part of the grant requirements, the updated vulnerability assessment will address the full range of physical hazards, apply the State's required sea-level rise projections, evaluate impacts across multiple sectors (including tribal, social equity, and cultural resources), and include targeted community engagement with disadvantaged populations and local tribes. The City will coordinate these activities with the California Coastal Commission, OPC, and other applicable agencies throughout the project.

The OPC SB 1 Grant Program is funded through a non-competitive, rolling application process. Staff anticipates applying before the next upcoming review window. The grant period allows for up to three years to complete the work. Grant funds would cover the full cost of the work proposed, no City match is required.

Fiscal Impact: The grant request will fully cover consultant costs associated with the vulnerability assessment update. City staff time for grant administration and coordination will be absorbed within existing workload. No General Fund contribution is anticipated.

Attachments:

1. OPC SB 1 Grant Solicitation: <https://opc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/SB1-Grant-Program-Solicitation-508.pdf>
2. Draft Scope of Work and Budget

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Reviewed By: Julia Gautho, City Clerk

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