



September 21, 2022

ITEM TITLE: REPORT ON THE BAYSHORE BIKEWAY RESILIENCY PROJECT – CREATION OF A COASTAL RESILIENCE CORRIDOR IN IMPERIAL BEACH. (0680-20)

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:

Environmental & Natural Resources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City received a grant from the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) for a sea level rise adaptation planning project for the northern shoreline of Imperial Beach adjacent to San Diego Bay. This planning project will specifically look at the Bayshore Bikeway corridor and adjacent open space area to repurpose the existing right-of-way into a multi-benefit coastal resilience corridor to protect the inland area from future coastal flooding while improving coastal access and improving transitional habitats. The purpose of the project is to increase the City’s resiliency to flooding and sea level rise impacts and provide enhanced flood protection for the Bayshore Bikeway corridor and adjacent Bayside Neighborhood. The project has the additional benefit of activating the Bayfront. As such, staff has conducted significant public outreach in preparation of conceptual plans, including five public workshops, two reports to the Design Review Board (DRB), two reports to the Tidelands Advisory Committee (TAC), and more than 20 meetings with local agencies and community groups. The intent of this meeting is to provide an information report on the project, present the initial design concepts including the concepts for public access and activation nodes for the Bayshore Bikeway Resiliency Project and receive comments from the City Council that allow staff to proceed with the development of 30 percent design and engineering plans.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council receive the report and presentation from staff on the Bayshore Bikeway Resiliency Project – Creation of a Coastal Resilience Corridor in Imperial Beach and provide staff with a recommendation on the preferred options for the three segments and comments on the proposed project concepts and design.

OPTIONS:

The City Council can also:

- Receive the report; or
- Request additional information.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

The City of Imperial Beach completed a Sea Level Rise Assessment in 2016 which identified the Bayside neighborhood as a low-lying area that is vulnerable to coastal flooding from the San Diego Bay. The Bayside neighborhood, identified by the State of California as an economically disadvantaged area within the City, is currently prone to flooding during high tide conditions. Projected future increases in the sea level will exacerbate the duration, intensity, and frequency of flooding in this neighborhood if no flood adaptation measures are implemented.



The City was awarded a planning grant in January 2021 from the Ocean Protection Council to explore the feasibility of designing and implementing a sea level rise adaptation project along the south end of San Diego Bay. The Bayshore Bikeway Resiliency Project officially kicked off in May of 2021. The scope of the Project includes a stakeholder driven process to develop a sea level rise adaptation plan for the south end of San Diego Bay that utilizes existing public right-of-way, infrastructure, and open space habitat to protect the Bayside neighborhood from future impacts of sea level rise for up to 3.5 feet. The outcome of the Project will result in 30 percent engineering plans for the City to proceed with the environmental review and allow the City to compete for future grant funds for construction. As part of the long-range planning for the Project, the City is also receiving public input on opportunities along the entire Bayfront that include enhanced public access and ideas for recreational and commercial activation for the area.

Over the past six months, staff conducted significant public outreach in preparation of conceptual plans, including five public workshops, two reports to the Design Review Board (DRB), two reports to the Tidelands Advisory Committee (TAC), and more than 20 meetings with local agencies and community groups. These conceptual plans focus on improvements to the low-lying sections of the bayfront from approximately State Route 75 (SR-75) to the Public Works facility at 10th Street (Attachment 1). Public input was received on proposed adaptation strategies that address existing and future flooding in the Bayside neighborhood; improvements for public access, recreation, and public safety for the Bayshore Bikeway; and opportunities to restore or enhance wetland habitat.

Staff has notated the feedback received from the DRB, TAC, partnering agencies, and the public and is currently in the process of developing the 30 percent plans. An attachment has been included with the staff report with the following project information and maps that will be further reviewed and addressed by staff during the presentation/report to the City Council:

- A map showing the extent of coastal flooding hazards from projected future sea level rise and storm surge if no improvements are made to protect the bayfront from flooding.
- A map of the project location that is further broken down into three Project Segments.
- Conceptual design options for the three project Segments:
 - Segment 1: The area from 7th Street to SR-75 and including areas around Pond 10A, includes three design options (A-C) and incorporates variations on a naturalized shoreline, living levee for flood protection. Proposed improvements in Segment 1 also reside within the City of Coronado.
 - Segment 2: The area includes the bikeway from 7th Street to 8th Street and incorporates a naturalized shoreline, living levee for flood protection.
 - Segment 3: The area extends to the Public Works facility at 10th Street and includes the Bayside Elementary School. Proposed improvements include a naturalized shoreline, living levee for flood protection, a multi-purposed storm water detention basin, and a tide control gate.
- A conceptual rendering of the multi-purpose storm water detention basin at Bayside Elementary School.
- Initial concepts for public access and activation nodes that will provide safer access to and from the bikeway for all users and will offer a unique user experience for passive recreation along the Imperial Beach section of the Bayshore Bikeway.
- Photos of the public outreach activities whereby the community was provided the opportunity to give input on a larger vision to improve public access and activate the entire Bayshore Bikeway section in Imperial Beach.

The intent of this report is to provide information on the project, present the initial design concepts for the Bayshore Bikeway Resiliency Project, and receive comments from the City Council that allow staff to proceed with the development of 30 percent design and engineering plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The project is statutorily exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15262 because the Project involves only planning studies and feasibility analyses to support development of future projects.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funds for this project are from the Ocean Protection Council Prop 68 grant in the amount of \$445,000. The City is providing a \$60,000 match for this grant from dedicated staff time to support the implementation of the Project.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Project Maps, Segment Options, and Concept Plans