



***Recent Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Santa Monica and the commission***

The City of Santa Monica (City) does not have an updated certified LCP. The City most recently completed a draft LUP in 2018. Coastal zone development therefore requires commission approval of a CDP following the City's local approval of the development.

On May 26, 2026, the Santa Monica City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and the commission that establishes a collaborative framework between the City and commission staff to facilitate timely completion and certification of a comprehensive LCP including both a LUP and IP. According to the City Council staff report, "[t]he proposed MOU is intended to improve coordination, establish clear communication protocols, and identify opportunities to streamline coastal permitting processes while maintaining protections for coastal resources and public access consistent with the [Coastal Act]."

The MOU identifies multiple elements where the City and commission will seek to prioritize the development of LCP policies and processes to "streamline permitting, provide for programmatic management, and facilitate sustainable and economically vibrant development within existing urbanized areas of the City's coastal zone." These include, but are not limited to, temporary events, outdoor dining, tools for City management of on-street and off-street parking, and certain commercial conversions, among others, and potential accelerated permitting pathways such as CDP exemptions, and administrative CDPs.

Both the City and commission committed to starting the LCP development process in July 2026 with a goal of LCP certification by December 31, 2027, while also acknowledging that the complexity of the LCP development may take additional time.

***Active transportation in the coastal zone***

Increasing the use of bicycling, walking, and other modes of transportation is an essential part of California's path to meeting its goals for greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled reductions. California has taken several steps in order to encourage the development of active transportation infrastructure as part of maintaining and improving the highway system. In 2017, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) published the first-ever statewide plan for active modes of transportation, the Toward an Active California - State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, with the following vision statement, "By 2040, people in California of all ages, abilities, and incomes can safely, conveniently, and comfortably walk and bicycle for their transportation needs." Each Caltrans District is in the process of completing or has completed a districtwide bicycle and pedestrian plan, in order to address active transportation needs along and across California.

SB 689 (Blakespear, Chapter 445, Statutes of 2024) sought to accelerate the development of bicycle lanes, pedestrian walkways, and other active transportation methods in the coastal zone by clarifying the requirements for the conversion of existing traffic lanes to active transportation uses. SB 689 also provided for streamlined approvals of CDPs for these conversions if certain conditions were met, including that public access to the coast was, on balance, enhanced. Previously, while not all bicycle lane projects in the coastal zone required a CDP or LCP amendment, some local

governments had experienced delays where an outdated LCP had hindered rapid conversion.

**Existing law:**

- 1) Establishes, pursuant to the Coastal Act, the commission in the California Natural Resources Agency.
- 2) Includes legislative findings and declarations that the goals of the state for the coastal zone are to:
  - a) Protect, maintain, enhance, and restore the overall quality of the coastal zone environment and its natural and artificial resources;
  - b) Ensure orderly, balanced utilization and conservation of coastal zone resources;
  - c) Maximize public access to and public recreational opportunities in the coastal zone consistent with resources conservation principles and rights of private property owners;
  - d) Ensure priority for coastal-dependent and coastal-related development over other development on the coast;
  - e) Encourage state and local initiatives and cooperation to implement coordinated planning and development for mutually beneficial uses; and
  - f) Anticipate, assess, plan for, and minimize or mitigate adverse environmental and economic effects of sea level rise. (PRC §30001.5)
- 3) Requires each local government in the coastal zone to prepare a local coastal program (LCP) for that portion of the coastal zone within its jurisdiction, as provided. Requires the precise content of each LCP to be determined by the local government in full consultation with the commission and full public participation. (PRC §30500)
- 4) Establishes a process through which a LCP may be amended by a local government including mechanisms by which amendments may be determined as minor or requiring rapid action and thereby not subject to normal review. (PRC §30501, 30514)
- 5) Authorizes the executive director of the commission to determine that an LCP amendment is *de minimis* if the director determines the amendment:
  - a) Would have no impact on coastal resources;
  - b) Is consistent with the Coastal Act's resources planning and management policies;
  - c) Does not propose any change in land use, water use, or the allowable use of property; and
  - d) The local government has provided public notice at least 21 days prior to submission of the amendment to accept public comments on the proposed amendments.
- 6) Requires that *de minimis* amendments must be noticed in the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the commission, and, if three or more members of the commission do not object to the determination, the amendment shall become part of the LCP ten days after the meeting. (PRC §30514)

- 7) Requires a person planning to perform or undertake any development in the coastal zone to obtain a CDP from the commission or local government enforcing a certified LCP. (PRC §30600)
- 8) Prohibits the commission from exercising its review authority over any new development within the area to which the certified LCP, or any portion thereof, applies. (PRC §30519)
- 9) Provides that an application by a local government to convert an existing motorized vehicle traffic lane into a dedicated bicycle lane, dedicated transit lane, or a pedestrian walkway shall not require a traffic study for the processing of either a CDP or an amendment to a LCP, as provided. (PRC §30610.91)
- 10) Provides that an amendment to a LCP to authorize the conversion of an existing motorized vehicle travel lane into a dedicated bicycle lane, dedicated transit lane, or a pedestrian walkway within the developed portion of an existing road right-of-way shall be processed through a *de minimis* review if the commission's executive director determines that the project will provide additional public access benefits, as provided. (PRC §30610.91)
- 11) Makes legislative findings and declarations that designing and building complete streets that safely accommodate nonmotorized vehicles, pedestrians, and motorized vehicles in the coastal zone is preferred and encouraged. (PRC §30610.91)

## **PROPOSED LAW**

This bill would:

- 1) On or before January 1, 2029, require the City to submit to the commission a complete, proposed LCP for the portion of the City in the coastal zone.
  - a) Require the commission to act within six months of the receipt of a submitted complete proposal, unless the City requests an extension. Require the proposed LCP to be processed as provided.
- 2) Prioritize the City for funding available to local governments by the California Department of Transportation's Active Transportation Program for projects consistent with the city's certified LCP if the City submits a complete, proposed LCP to the commission on or before December 31, 2027, as provided.
- 3) Require the commission, within 45 days of receipt of a complete, proposed LCP from the City, to provide the City, in writing, a list of identified issues, if any, that require further refinement through suggested modifications for the LCP to be found consistent with the Coastal Act.
- 4) Require the City and the commission, following receipt of the commission's list of issues, to coordinate expeditiously and in good faith to reach agreement on any suggested modifications within six months of receipt of the submitted complete proposal.

- a) Require the commission, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to reimburse the City for reasonable costs associated with the time spent coordinating on the suggested modifications, if the commission fails to act on the city's submitted complete LCP within six months of receipt.
  - b) Require the commission to provide quarterly written updates to the Legislature describing the reasons for the delay, a summary of the remaining steps necessary to place the LCP on the commission's meeting agenda, and an estimated timeline for approval and certification of the City's LCP if the commission fails to act on the City's complete, proposed LCP within six months of receipt unless the City asks for an extension.
- 5) Require the City to immediately assume CDP issuance authority subsequent to the effective certification of the City's LCP and acceptance of the LCP by the City, as provided.
  - 6) State legislative intent to expedite the provision of safe, multimodal travel within urbanized areas of the coastal zone for the purpose of increasing public access, limiting vehicle miles traveled, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as specified.
  - 7) Recast the requirement that a traffic study not be included in an application for a CDP or LCP amendment to convert an existing motorized vehicle travel lane into a dedicated bicycle lane, dedicated transit land, or a pedestrian walkway.
  - 8) Modify the requirement that a LCP amendment be processed as *de minimis* by the commission executive director for a proposal to convert the developed portion of an existing road right-of-way into a bicycle right-of-way, transit right-of-way, or pedestrian walkway to include both part or all of the developed portion and a combination of the new uses, as specified, and that the proposal will provide commensurate or enhanced public access to the coast.
    - a) Require the commission executive director in making the *de minimis* determination to consider the public access benefits of enhanced transit infrastructure, and bicycle and pedestrian access. Require that projects removing public parking are not precluded from being eligible for *de minimis* processing.
  - 9) Require the commission executive director to waive the CDP requirement for an application for a CDP to convert part or all of the developed portion of an existing road right-of-way that is not a state highway into a bicycle right-of-way, transit right-of-way, pedestrian walkway or a combination thereof, if the executive director determines that, on balance, the project will provide commensurate or enhanced public access to the coast.
    - a) Require the commission executive director in making the determination to waive the CDP requirement to consider the public access benefits of enhanced transit infrastructure, and bicycle and pedestrian access. Require that projects removing public parking are not precluded from being eligible for *de minimis* processing.
  - 10) Require the commission executive director to maintain and make available for public review records of all applications submitted pursuant to 8) and 9).

- a) On or before January 31 or each year, require the commission to post on its internet website and transmit a legislative report for the preceding calendar year that includes, at a minimum, all of the following:
    - i) The total number of applications received pursuant to 8) and 9) and the relevant application numbers.
    - ii) The number of applications where a CDP was waived, including a brief project description and the basis for the determination, as provided.
    - iii) The number of applications denied a CDP waiver and the reason for the denial.
    - iv) The number of applications pending review as of December 31 of the reporting year.
    - v) Any geographic or jurisdictional patterns identified in the distribution of applications, waivers, or denials.
  - b) Require the records to be retained for 10 years and to be made available to the public in a machine-readable format. Require nothing to be construed to delay or otherwise affect the timeline for processing an individual application under 8) and 9).
  - c) Sunset 10) on December 31, 2032.
- 11) Provide that a special statute is necessary because of the need to accelerate housing in the City and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for transportation in the City. Require reimbursement for certain state-mandated costs to local agencies and school districts, as specified.

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT**

According to the author, "AB 1740 provides the City of Santa Monica, in coordination with the California Coastal Commission, clear timelines, accountability measures, and reporting requirements designed to ensure the LCP for Santa Monica is completed and implemented. In addition to part of the bill specific to the Santa Monica LCP, the revised bill also establishes a statewide, streamlined process for approving bike, pedestrian, and transit improvements that enhance public access to and within the coastal zone. The bill also requires the Coastal Commission to collect and report data on approvals, denials, and pending applications for the new expedited process. That transparency will give the public and the Legislature the information needed to evaluate whether good bike, transit, and pedestrian projects are being approved under the streamlined authority."

"AB 1740 started an important conversation about how we protect California's coastline while ensuring our coastal communities can thrive. I'm proud that what began as a proposal to address permitting challenges evolved into a collaborative agreement that preserves California's gold-standard coastal protections while creating a clear path for Santa Monica to regain local permitting authority, and for communities in the coastal zone to be able to add bike, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure. That means a more predictable process for the kinds of projects that make places like the Third Street

Promenade vibrant – from outdoor dining and mobility improvements to public spaces and local business investments.”

“This agreement reflects the countless conversations by the many stakeholders who came to the table in good faith, and demonstrates that ambitious legislation can create the momentum needed to solve problems that go unresolved for years.”

### **ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION**

As noted below, recent author amendments after the Committee letter submittal deadline may affect existing opposition as the amendments appear to address concerns raised by the opposition.

Taking an “oppose unless amended” position in a joint sign-on letter to a previous version of the bill, the Surfrider Foundation objected to exemptions from Coastal Act for various development activities in the City, while supporting the active transportation conversion and commitment to LCP development.

The Generations at Virginia Avenue writing in opposition notes that “the California coast belongs to everyone. [...] AB 1740 would exempt numerous projects from Coastal Development Permit requirements within the City of Santa Monica. While some projects may seem limited in scope, their cumulative impacts can affect public access, visitor-serving amenities, transportation, neighborhood character, and the overall experience of the coast. The Coastal Development Permit process exists to evaluate these impacts and provide transparency before changes occur.”

### **COMMENTS**

***This bill is double-referred.*** This bill is referred to both this Committee and the Senate Local Government Committee. This Committee is the committee of first referral. Elements of this bill under the Senate Local Government Committee’s jurisdiction are included here for completeness and context and will be discussed before that Committee.

***Codifies and incentivizes recent MOU.*** As described above, the City and the commission signed a MOU making certain commitments for the submittal of a LCP for certification by the commission. This bill both codifies that commitment to an effort to certify a LCP for the City of Santa Monica in the near future, and provides incentives for its achievement.

***Accelerated coastal development permitting.*** When the City’s LCP is certified, the City would be able to approve the CDP pursuant to the certified LCP at the same time as the City’s local permit. The additional provisions concerning the conversion of certain designated roadway lanes to active transportation lanes should also result in accelerated or waived coastal development permitting statewide.

***Recent amendments and stakeholder positions.*** Recent author amendments substantially revised the bill after the letter submittal deadline. The author amendments appear to address at least some of the concerns raised by the opposition. These amendments have resulted in previously-expressed opposition positions on the bill changing. The commission is neutral. In view of this, while support and opposition are

listed below, it is important to note that these positions, except as noted, are based upon an earlier version of this bill.

***Recent related legislation***

SB 689 (Blakespear, Chapter 445, Statutes of 2024) accelerates the development of bicycle lanes, pedestrian walkways and other active transportation methods in the coastal zone, as provided.

**SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS: none**

**SUPPORT**

City of Santa Monica (co-sponsor)  
Streets For All (co-sponsor)  
AARP California  
Abundant Housing LA  
Abundant Housing Pasadena  
Abundant Housing Sunset  
Alhambra Urbanists  
Bay Area Council  
Burbank Abundant Housing  
California Apartment Association  
California Attractions and Parks Association  
California Building Industry Association  
California Chamber of Commerce  
California Council for Affordable Housing  
California Downtown Association  
California Mobility and Parking Association  
California Restaurant Association  
California Travel Association  
California YIMBY  
Central Valley Urban Institute  
Circulate San Diego  
City of Culver City  
City of San Diego  
Climate Resolve  
County of Los Angeles  
Downtown Los Angeles for All  
Downtown Santa Monica, Inc.  
Eastside Housing for All  
Environment California  
Fieldstead & Company  
Glendale YIMBY  
Greenbelt Alliance  
Housing Action Coalition  
Independent Hospitality Coalition  
LISC San Diego  
Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator  
Los Angeles County Business Federation  
MidPen Housing  
Move LA

New Way Homes  
Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce  
Santa Monica Forward  
SPUR  
Streets Are For Everyone (SAFE)  
The Brig Bar and Restaurant  
The Honorable Rex Richardson, Mayor, City of Long Beach  
The Honorable Traci Park, Councilmember, 11<sup>th</sup> District, City of Los Angeles  
The Wish You Were Here Group  
Urban Environmentalists Los Angeles  
Venice Chamber of Commerce  
Westside Council of Chambers of Commerce  
Westside for Everyone

**OPPOSITION**

Audubon California (unless amended)  
CleanEarth4Kids.org (unless amended)  
Coalition for a Beautiful Los Angeles (unless amended)  
Coastal Alliance  
Coastal Corridor Alliance (unless amended)  
Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council  
Citizens Preserving Venice (unless amended)  
Environmental Defense Center  
Escondido Neighbors United (unless amended)  
Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks (unless amended)  
Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve (unless amended)  
Friends of Sunset Park  
Generations at Virginia Avenue  
Green Foothills (unless amended)  
National Parks Conservation Association (unless amended)  
Natural Resources Defense Council (unless amended)  
North of Montana Association  
Northeast Neighbors  
Ocean Defenders Alliance (unless amended)  
Outdoor Outreach (unless amended)  
Santa Monica Architects for a Responsible Tomorrow (SMa.r.t.)  
Santa Monica Coalition for a Livable City  
Santa Monica Democratic Club  
Santa Monica Helping Hub  
Santa Monica Neighbors  
Santa Monica Wilshire Montana Neighborhood Coalition  
Santa Monicans United  
Sea and Sage Audubon Society (unless amended)  
SoCal 350 Climate Action (unless amended)  
Surf Justice Collective (unless amended)  
Surfers Who Serve  
Surfrider Foundation, Los Angeles Chapter (unless amended)  
Tubb Canyon Desert Conservancy (unless amended)  
Venice Neighborhood Council  
WILDCOAST (unless amended)

Numerous individuals

**-- END --**