
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1740 (Zbur) - Coastal resources: local coastal program: coastal development permits: City of Santa Monica

Version: July 2, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: N.R. &W. 7 - 0, L. GOV. 7 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Ashley Ames

Bill Summary: This bill would require the City of Santa Monica to submit a complete proposed local coastal program to the California Coastal Commission by January 1, 2029, and require the California Coastal Commission to act on the proposal within six months, as provided. The bill would further require accelerated permitting for the conversion of certain roadways to active transportation uses, among other things.

Fiscal Impact:

- The Coastal Commission estimates annual costs of about \$98,000 (General Fund) for a period of five years to implement the annual reporting requirement in the bill.
- To the extent the Commission on State Mandates determines that the provisions of this bill create a new program or impose a higher level of service on local agencies, local agencies could claim reimbursement of those costs, which could have a General Fund impact. The bill would create a new duty for the City of Santa Monica.

Background: The California Coastal Commission was created by voter initiative in 1972 and made permanent by the California Coastal Act of 1976 (PRC §§30000 et seq.). It plans for and regulates land and water use in the coastal zone, which excludes San Francisco Bay. An independent, quasi-judicial state agency, its stated mission is protecting and enhancing California's coast and ocean for present and future generations through careful planning and regulation of environmentally sustainable development, rigorous use of science, strong public participation, education, and effective intergovernmental coordination.

Development in the coastal zone generally requires a coastal development permit (CDP) issued either by the commission or by a local government whose local coastal program (LCP) the commission has certified, with Coastal Act policies serving as the standards for judging proposals within commission jurisdiction. LCPs are land use planning documents establishing a framework for development and coastal resource protection in a jurisdiction's coastal zone, specifying appropriate kinds, locations, and intensities of land and water uses. Each consists of a Land Use Plan containing policies and an Implementation Plan containing the measures that carry them out, such as zoning ordinances, zoning district maps, and other implementing actions.

Santa Monica lacks an updated certified LCP, having last completed a draft Land Use Plan in 2018, so coastal zone development there requires commission approval of a CDP after the City approves the project locally. On May 26, 2026, the City Council approved a memorandum of understanding with the commission creating a collaborative framework to complete and certify a comprehensive LCP with both a LUP

and IP. Per the Council staff report, the MOU aims to improve coordination, establish clear communication protocols, and identify ways to streamline coastal permitting while preserving Coastal Act protections for coastal resources and public access. It identifies priority areas for LCP policies and processes intended to streamline permitting, allow programmatic management, and support sustainable, economically vibrant development in already urbanized parts of the City's coastal zone — among them temporary events, outdoor dining, City management tools for on-street and off-street parking, and certain commercial conversions — along with potential accelerated pathways such as CDP exemptions and administrative CDPs. Both parties committed to beginning LCP development in July 2026 and targeting certification by December 31, 2027, while acknowledging the process may take longer.

Expanding bicycling, walking, and other active transportation modes is central to California's greenhouse gas and vehicle miles traveled reduction goals. Caltrans published the state's first statewide active modes plan in 2017, *Toward an Active California – State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, envisioning that by 2040 Californians of all ages, abilities, and incomes can safely, conveniently, and comfortably walk and bicycle for their transportation needs, and each Caltrans District has completed or is completing a districtwide bicycle and pedestrian plan. SB 689 (Blakespear, Chapter 445, Statutes of 2024) sought to speed development of bicycle lanes, pedestrian walkways, and other active transportation facilities in the coastal zone by clarifying requirements for converting existing traffic lanes to active transportation uses and providing streamlined CDP approvals for such conversions where certain conditions are met, including that coastal public access is on balance enhanced. Not all coastal zone bicycle lane projects had required a CDP or LCP amendment, but some local governments had faced delays where an outdated LCP slowed conversions.

Proposed Law: Existing law requires each local government in the coastal zone to prepare an LCP in full consultation with the Coastal Commission and with full public participation (PRC §30500), and creates amendment processes, including expedited tracks for minor or urgent changes (PRC §§30501, 30514). The executive director may deem an amendment de minimis if it would not affect coastal resources, is consistent with Coastal Act policies, proposes no change in land, water, or allowable property use, and followed at least 21 days' public notice; it then becomes part of the LCP ten days after appearing on the commission's next agenda unless three or more commissioners object (PRC §30514). Development in the coastal zone requires a coastal development permit from the Coastal Commission or a local government with a certified LCP (PRC §30600), and the commission may not review new development in areas covered by a certified LCP (PRC §30519). Existing law also exempts applications to convert a motorized traffic lane into a dedicated bicycle lane, transit lane, or pedestrian walkway from traffic study requirements, directs that LCP amendments for such conversions within an existing road right-of-way be processed as de minimis if the executive director finds added public access benefits, and declares complete streets in the coastal zone preferred and encouraged (PRC §30610.91).

This bill would:

1. Require the City of Santa Monica to submit a complete proposed LCP for its portion of the coastal zone to the Coastal Commission by January 1, 2029 — a new duty that would create a state-mandated local program.

2. Require the Coastal Commission to act on that complete proposal within six months of receiving it, unless the City requests an extension.
3. Require the Coastal Commission, within 45 days of receiving the complete proposal, to give the City a written list of any issues needing further refinement through suggested modifications, and require the City and Coastal Commission to work together promptly and in good faith to agree on any suggested modifications within six months of submission.
4. Require the Coastal Commission, if it fails to act within that six-month window, to post quarterly written updates to the Legislature explaining, among other things, why it is delayed.
5. Require that where converting all or part of a developed existing road right-of-way into a bicycle right-of-way, transit right-of-way, pedestrian walkway, or some combination needs an LCP amendment, the amendment be processed under the de minimis procedures if the executive director finds the project would, on balance, provide comparable or better public access to the coast.
6. Waive the coastal development permit requirement altogether for such a conversion on a road right-of-way that is not a state highway, again if the executive director finds the project would, on balance, provide comparable or better coastal access.
7. Require the Coastal Commission, until December 31, 2032, to post on its website and send to the Legislature an annual report by January 31 covering, among other things, the total number of coastal development permit applications received for these non-state-highway conversions.
8. Make legislative findings and declarations justifying a special statute applying only to the City of Santa Monica.

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.

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