

Date of Hearing: April 20, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2373 (Dixon) – As Introduced February 19, 2026

SUBJECT: The California Coastal Act: local coastal program: sea level rise plan: neighborhood-scale adaptation approach

SUMMARY: Authorizes local governments lying, in whole or in part, within the coastal zone to include a neighborhood-scale adaptation approach when including land use policies and implementation measures in their local coastal plan (LCP) or a sea level rise plan.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the Coastal Act, which provides for the planning and regulation of development within the coastal zone. (Public Resources Code (PRC) 30000 *et seq.*)
- 2) Requires local governments in the coastal zone to have a LCP approved by the California Coastal Commission (Commission) for the local government's land use plans. (PRC 30500)
- 3) Requires any person wishing to perform or undertake any development in the coastal zone, in addition to obtaining any other permit required by law from any local government or from any state, regional, or local agency, to obtain a coastal development permit (CDP). (PRC 30600)
- 4) Requires a local government lying, in whole or in part, within the coastal zone or within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission to develop a sea level rise plan, as specified. (PRC 30985)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Authorizes a local government lying, in whole or in part, within the coastal zone to include a neighborhood-scale adaptation approach when including land use policies and implementation measures in their LCP or a sea level rise plan for that portion of the coastal zone within its jurisdiction.
- 2) Authorizes a neighborhood-scale adaptation approach to include, but not be limited to, both of the following:
 - a) The identification of areas or assets, including, but not limited to, a neighborhood or developed area, beach area, protected coastal resource area, site, or area with infrastructure or assets, that are subject to this approach; and,
 - b) Policies that reflect the shared planning features and specific, preferred adaptation strategies intended to minimize, mitigate, or avoid coastal impacts for different areas or development types based on the geophysical and land use characteristics.
- 3) Requires neighborhood-scale adaptation approaches to be consistent with PRC 30500 and 30985.

- 4) Defines neighborhood-scale adaptation approach” as an approach that allows local governments to identify and develop adaptation strategies that are specific to defined areas or assets within the jurisdiction of a local government that share characteristics, including geologic, land use, or other shared characteristics of an area, for focused adaptation planning to minimize and mitigate potential impacts associated with sea level rise.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

1) **Author’s statement:**

AB 2373 will allow the local governments to use the neighborhood-scale adaptation approach when including land use policies and implementation measures in their local coastal program or sea level rise plan.

By codifying the Coastal Commission’s recommendations in statute, this bill will provide cities and counties within the Coastal Zone with clarity and certainty about the best practices for completing their LCPs. In addition, this legislation maintains existing flexibility that the Commission has when considering armoring or nature-based solutions along coastal protected shorelines or community contexts.

- 2) **Local Coastal Plans.** The Commission administers the Coastal Act and regulates proposed development along the coast and in nearby areas in the coastal zone. Generally, any development activity in the coastal zone requires a CDP from the Commission or local government with a certified LCP. In the jurisdictions with certified LCPs, local governments issue CDPs with detailed planning and design standards. About 88% of the coastal zone is governed by a certified LCP.

Updating LCPs to reflect changing climatic conditions, including to address sea level rise, is a complex process. Challenges include significant data and information needs, limited tools, lengthy analyses and planning processes, inadequate funding, unresolved disagreements between local and Commission staff, and legal uncertainties, among others, which have slowed or stalled local government and Commission efforts to update LCPs for sea level rise. Some jurisdictions have expressed concern about initiating LCP updates due to these challenges. However, many local governments have taken the first steps to conduct vulnerability assessments and adaptation plans to support policy development. Still others have developed policies to support their local sea level rise planning efforts that have been incorporated into LCPs adopted and certified by the Commission.

The Commission’s Local Government Working Group (Working Group) is a collaboration between the Commission and local government partners to, among other things, identify ways to improve the LCP process, particularly as it relates to updating LCPs to address sea level rise. Some existing LCPs have not been updated for 25 years or more.

- 3) **Neighborhood-scale planning.** The Commission and the Working Group developed a neighbor-scale planning draft discussion paper¹ (September 2024) wherein they discuss the concept that proactively choosing adaptation strategies that reflect a mix of geophysical characteristics and land use and development types and implementing them at appropriate

scales —or “neighborhood-scale adaptation”—will be more effective than parcel-by-parcel, ad hoc responses. The discussion paper specifically notes that the document is not intended to be adopted by the Commission in the immediate future, nor is it intended to provide legal guidance of any kind; rather, it is simply an introduction to a topic that is meant to provide information and spur discussion. No further reporting, let alone regulatory decision-making has advanced on this concept. This bill may be considered premature while those administrative discussions are ongoing.

- 4) **Pilot project.** The City of Pacifica (City) received approval from the Commission in May 2025 on their LCP and began implementing a neighborhood-scale approach.

The City had only made some minor amendments to its LCP since its initial adoption in 1980; City officials needed to overhaul the plan to reflect newer science and planning around climate change. Local officials piloted a “neighborhood” approach by developing special shoreline resiliency areas within the City. The actions the City takes today are designed for specific, near-term benefits over the next 10, 20, or 50 years. During the next century, the best available science may require different actions to combat future climate impacts. Pacifica’s new LCP includes a balance of hard armoring for developed areas and “soft” solutions, like habitat restoration, which will provide natural protection to the coastal environment.

- 5) **Concerns.** Stakeholders have routinely discussed concerns to the Commission about prescriptive, one-size-fits-all approaches that lack flexibility to address local contexts and goals. Some stakeholders have noted that the options for addressing sea level rise on, for example, an urbanized beach in southern California will have to be different than those for a less developed blufftop in northern California. They question what constitutes a “neighborhood” when applying the “scale.” This bill doesn’t define that.

Furthermore, LPCs can be approved in segments. The Coastal Act allows for the division of coastal zones into separate geographic segments, resulting in multiple LCPs segments. Each segment can have its own set of policies and regulations that are specific to each area. This segmentation helps local governments tailor their coastal management plans to the unique needs and characteristics of each segment.

- 6) **Committee amendments.** The *committee may wish to consider* amending the bill to require provided that the Commission finds the policies and standards of any neighborhood-scale adaptation approach to be consistent with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, and prioritize nature-based solutions.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION

Support

California State Association of Counties
 City of Oceanside
 City of Paramount
 City of Pismo Beach
 City of Point Arena
 City of San Clemente
 League of California Cities

Opposition

None on file

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ⁱ [W8-9-2024-exhibits.pdf](#)