



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY MANAGER: OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

File #: 18-184

Board Meeting Date: 3/13/2018

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Jim Eggemeyer, Director, Office of Sustainability

Subject: Final Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment and Climate Change Preparedness Action Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the Final Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment for the Bayside and North Coast of San Mateo County and direct staff to complete the assessment for the South Coast and County Facilities and continue work on the County's Climate Change Preparedness Action Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The County launched Sea Change SMC in 2015 to bring together and provide resources to local governments and agencies in San Mateo County on the issue of sea level rise. The first two Sea Change SMC tasks included developing a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment (Assessment) and initiating a community engagement process to build support for cross jurisdictional collaboration on preparations for climate change impacts.

The County has worked with a broad coalition of governments and also with community stakeholders to develop the Assessment. The study area for the Assessment includes the entire Bayshore and the North Coast (Half Moon Bay north) and focuses on the most significant impacts of climate change in San Mateo County: increased flooding and erosion due to sea level rise. The Assessment lists assets by city and unincorporated areas that are exposed to sea level rise across different sectors, including transportation, energy, wastewater infrastructure, hospitals, schools, and natural and recreational areas. The study also explores public health risks and community vulnerability, provides a detailed vulnerability analysis of 29 assets and one community, and includes asset exposure inventory lists for all 20 cities and the unincorporated areas in San Mateo County.

Since presenting the draft Assessment to the Board of Supervisors on April 11, 2017, staff reviewed and responded to comments received on the Draft Assessment, held five workshops to gather feedback on the Assessment and next steps, and produced summary documents. Staff shared a preliminary draft with cities and stakeholders, met individually with interested cities and agencies, and provided presentations to stakeholder groups, local planning commissions, businesses, and

community and environmental groups on the Draft Assessment.

DISCUSSION:

Since the draft assessment was presented to your Board, staff responded to comments and recommendations from affected cities, regional agencies, local environmental and non-profit organizations, and County residents; developed a comment response document available on www.seachangesmc.com <<http://www.seachangesmc.com>>; and updated the Assessment as needed. In addition, staff incorporated feedback and suggestions received for Sea Change SMC next steps at the stakeholder workshops into the Assessment. Given the length of the Assessment, staff also produced a Highlights Document and updated the Sea Change SMC website with concise summaries of the Assessment key findings that are accessible to a broad range of audiences. The next steps for Sea Change SMC include the following:

- 1) Complete the Assessment Phase
 - a. Conduct sea level rise vulnerability assessments for the South Coast of the County;
 - b. Conduct sea level rise vulnerability assessments for major County Facilities; and
 - c. Assess countywide vulnerability to additional climate change impacts such as heat, wildfires, and precipitation.
- 2) Initiate a Planning Phase
 - a. Develop a Framework for local action on Climate Change Preparedness and Adaptation;
 - b. Develop Policy and Planning Toolkits to help the County and cities identify, prioritize, and integrate sea level rise and climate change adaptation strategies into policies and plans, including community development and capital project planning; and
 - c. Develop Community Resilience Plans for priority communities to prepare, adapt, and recover from climate impacts.
- 3) Continue the Engagement and Implementation Phase
 - a. Continue to raise awareness and build support for collaboration on climate change by launching a Climate Collaborative that will include local government staff, elected officials, and community stakeholders;
 - b. Conduct presentations to city councils and community groups;
 - c. Expand upon our sea level rise program to engage high school students; and
 - d. Develop a Communication Toolkit to support stakeholders in framing and communicating information about sea level rise and climate change.

Developing and implementing a San Mateo County climate change preparedness strategy will require collaboration. No single entity can effectively tackle the significant impacts of climate change, but if we are informed and continue working together with partners throughout the County, San Mateo County will be better prepared for the impacts of climate change.

The Final Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment and Climate Change Preparedness Action Plan contribute to the County's Shared Vision 2025 by convening county-wide stakeholders to develop solutions to climate change impacts. Identifying and implementing appropriate solutions and next steps to reduce these community-level risks will require ongoing coordination, collaboration, and stakeholder engagement.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the next steps of the Climate Change Preparedness Action Plan. The work detailed above will be funded through FY 2016-18 budget

allocations for sea level rise planning and the recently-awarded Caltrans Adaptation Planning Grant.