



**City Manager Lorie Tinfow contributes a monthly column to the *Pacifica Tribune* to connect with local residents and keep Pacificans informed on issues that are of current interest in the City of Pacifica. Below is the submission for the April 6, 2016 edition of the *Pacifica Tribune*, which focuses on the issue of Sea Level Rise.**

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### **The City of Pacifica Responds to Sea Level Rise Locally and Regionally**

Recent news headlines trumpeting “the warmest winter in recorded history” have contributed to our collective sense of urgency related to sea level rise and its expected impacts. The City of Pacifica is responding by joining forces with other agencies to form a regional plan and leveraging every resource available for local repairs.

In the past year, the City of Pacifica has joined our neighboring cities to respond to the “slow moving emergency” that characterizes the impacts of sea level rise. Of particular note are the following three regional efforts:

- **San Mateo County Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment.** The County’s Department of Sustainability is coordinating a regional assessment of how sea level rise will likely affect the agencies in our County. The project began last summer with a kick-off meeting that Council members, City staff and several community members attended. A consulting firm familiar with sea level rise issues was hired and a working group began collecting the information needed for the assessment. I assigned our Public Works Director to participate on our behalf and coordinate the involvement of other City staff. The assessment is expected to be complete this year.
- **San Francisco Littoral Cell – Coastal Regional Sediment Management Plan.** Last year, the California Coastal Sediment Management Workgroup resumed work on evaluating the movement of sand along the coastlines of San Francisco, Daly City and Pacifica, that included modeling the effects of sea level rise and climate change. I again assigned our Public Works Director to participate on behalf of the City and supply Pacifica-specific information. The draft plan was published for public review in January 2016. While we have some concerns about data gaps in the model, we continue to participate in this effort to understand how sand movement affects our coastline.
- **The City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) Water Committee.** The impacts of sea level rise are expected to be dramatic, far-reaching, and costly; no single city or agency can be effective by acting alone. C/CAG, comprised of elected officials who represent all cities and the County, recently established a subcommittee to focus on all water-related issues including sea level rise. As a structure, it offers an ideal mechanism for pursuing grant funds, sharing information and ultimately helping to guide the region’s response to sea level rise. Pacifica City Council member Nihart has been selected to chair the committee and City staff will participate as well.

While being part of these regional efforts is important, Pacifica has even more immediate needs related to protecting our coastline. First, we must repair the City infrastructure damaged by this year's El Nino storms. Some of the work has already started and we are working with the State's Office of Emergency Services on grants to reimburse the City for a portion (75-85%) of the costs.

Second is protecting City streets and underground utilities that serve the homes and businesses along Beach Boulevard, the section of Palmetto Avenue near the Milagra outfall, and sections of Esplanade Avenue bordered by coastal bluffs. With support from U.S. Congresswoman Jackie Speier's office, we have asked the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for help with planning and construction to rebuild the sea wall along Beach Boulevard north of the pier, repair the outfall, and reinforce the bluff edge along Esplanade Avenue.

The ocean is one of Pacifica's greatest assets and yet poses one of our greatest risks. While other coastal cities will eventually face sea level rise issues, Pacifica is facing them now. In response, we are leveraging every resource available to us today and partnering regionally to develop a shared long-term plan. We know that an effective response to sea level rise will require thoughtfully considered actions pursued over many years. Our work to adapt to a changing ocean while preserving what we love about our City has just begun.

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