



City of Santa Barbara

City Administrator's Office

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January 12, 2021

BEACON Board of Directors
105 East Anapamu Street, Suite 201
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Draft BEACON Strategic Plan: 2021-2026

Dear Chair Hart and BEACON Board of Directors,

City of Santa Barbara staff have reviewed the Draft BEACON Strategic Plan: 2021-2026 that will be discussed at the January 15, 2021 meeting of the BEACON Board of Directors and offer the following comments for your consideration.

In August 2020, the City of Santa Barbara released a Draft Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan for public review. On December 9, 2020 the City's Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan Subcommittee unanimously approved a recommendation to Council to adopt and begin implementation of the Adaptation Plan. Adoption of the Adaptation Plan will be considered at the February 2, 2021 City Council hearing.

The Adaptation Plan, like most other Adaptation Plans currently being developed throughout the state, takes a phased approach to adaptation planning based on monitoring of changed conditions and actions to reduce vulnerabilities when certain thresholds are reached. One of the central recommendations in the Adaptation Plan is that a shoreline monitoring program be developed in coordination with state, federal, and regional agencies to track changes from sea-level rise and measure effectiveness of adaptation actions. Moving forward, all member agencies to BEACON will likely need shoreline monitoring not only to adapt to sea-level rise, but also to satisfy state permitting requirements that are increasingly asking for shoreline monitoring as a condition for project approvals. It will be most effective and efficient for all the region's agencies to use the same parameters and methods for shoreline monitoring. In addition, BEACON is uniquely positioned to undertake monitoring associated with sea-level rise given that BEACON already coordinates beach monitoring in the region.

Aside from shoreline monitoring, the City's Adaptation Plan identifies many other potential opportunities for BEACON members to coordinate on issues related to sea-level rise including: development of joint goals in adaptation planning; coordination on studies, projects, and funding opportunities; and updates to the Coastal Regional Sediment Management Plan to incorporate sea-level rise impacts and adaptation. As you recall, the BEACON Board of Directors sent a letter to the City dated September 18, 2020 on the Draft Adaptation Plan that was supportive of these potential opportunities for BEACON members to coordinate on sea-level rise.

We have reviewed the proposed Draft BEACON Strategic Plan and see several objectives for incorporating sea-level rise analysis into BEACON's existing projects and plans. However, we support going beyond these objectives and modifying the Strategic Plan to include a new main goal that more clearly states an intention for BEACON to become a regional coordination and planning entity for issues related to sea-level rise, particularly in the area of shoreline monitoring. It is important that we start now on planning for sea-level rise and shoreline monitoring, in particular, should be expanded soon to document baseline conditions before significant changes from sea-level rise occur. A new sea-level rise goal would position BEACON well in applying for grant funds for shoreline monitoring and other sea-level rise related efforts.

Thank you for considering these comments on the Strategic Plan. We look forward to continued participation in BEACON as it moves into this next phase of regional coordination.

Sincerely,



Paul Casey
City Administrator

Cc: Mayor and City Council
Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Plan Subcommittee
Marc Beyeler, Executive Director, BEACON
Rebecca Bjork, Interim Director, Community Development Department and
Sustainability and Resilience Department
Mike Wiltshire, Director, Waterfront Department
Jill Zachary, Director, Parks and Recreation Department
Renee Brooke, City Planner, Community Development Department
Daniel Gullett, Principal Planner, Community Development Department
Melissa Hetrick, Project Planner, Community Development Department