

California Coastal Commission Key Metrics Report 2025



Introduction

Every year, the California Coastal Commission approves hundreds of new development proposals, working closely with applicants to ensure projects, where applicable, contain protections for natural habitats and public access to the shoreline. This includes issuing Coastal Development Permits (CDPs) and permit waivers, as well as amendments to Local Coastal Programs (LCPs). It also involves the review of projects proposed by the federal government or federally regulated activities such as offshore oil and offshore wind development.

In addition, city and county governments along the coast typically issue more than 1,000 CDPs annually, which represents the majority of new projects approved in the Coastal Zone. The Coastal Commission tracks these local coastal permits and hears appeals of a few dozen such projects every year. In 2025, the Commission did not deny any of the projects it heard on appeal.

In past years, the data related to these actions has been provided as a component of the annual Year in Review Report. To improve public transparency, the commission started compiling this Key Metrics Report as a stand-alone report in 2024, providing expanded analytics and additional detail focused solely on the agency's core planning and regulatory actions.

This year's report includes a revision to the methodology for calculating processing times for LCPs and CDPs. To improve accuracy, the report now categorizes projects based on the year the Coastal Commission acted on them — as opposed to the year they were submitted to the Commission. This eliminates any discrepancy created when an application is submitted in one calendar year but approved in another, while continuing to ensure that all submitted projects are accounted for.

Coastal development planning

Coastal Commission staff operate out of six district offices throughout the Coastal Zone, from San Diego to Arcata. The agency also has an Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency Unit, which is dedicated to the review of projects in state waters as well as those proposed or permitted by the federal government.

Each of these regional district offices serves unique communities with diverse geographies, valuable natural resources and unique land-use planning needs, which are reflected in each district's workload. For instance, the North Central Coast and Central Coast districts issued the most emergency permits in 2025, largely as a result storm surges and flooding impacting that stretch of coast. The South Coast District had the largest regular permitting workload, which is partly a reflection of large segments of Coastal Zone in this district where a local government has yet to adopt a certified LCP, such as the cities of Los Angeles and Santa Monica. In such cases, the commission retains primary permitting responsibility in the Coastal Zone.

In 2025, the commission approved a total of 160 CDPs, 250 project waivers, 43 emergency permits and 71 LCP amendments. The agency denied only one project, which involved a proposal to reconfigure public boat moorings for small vessels in Newport Beach Harbor.

*All actions were taken at the Coastal Commission's monthly hearings, which are held in different locations across the state to increase public participation.

**The Coastal Commission and local government planning and permitting activity in the Coastal Zone are tracked using the agency's Coastal Data Management System.

***Cover art was submitted by Matthew McFaul for the 2025 California Ocean & Coastal Amateur Photography Contest.

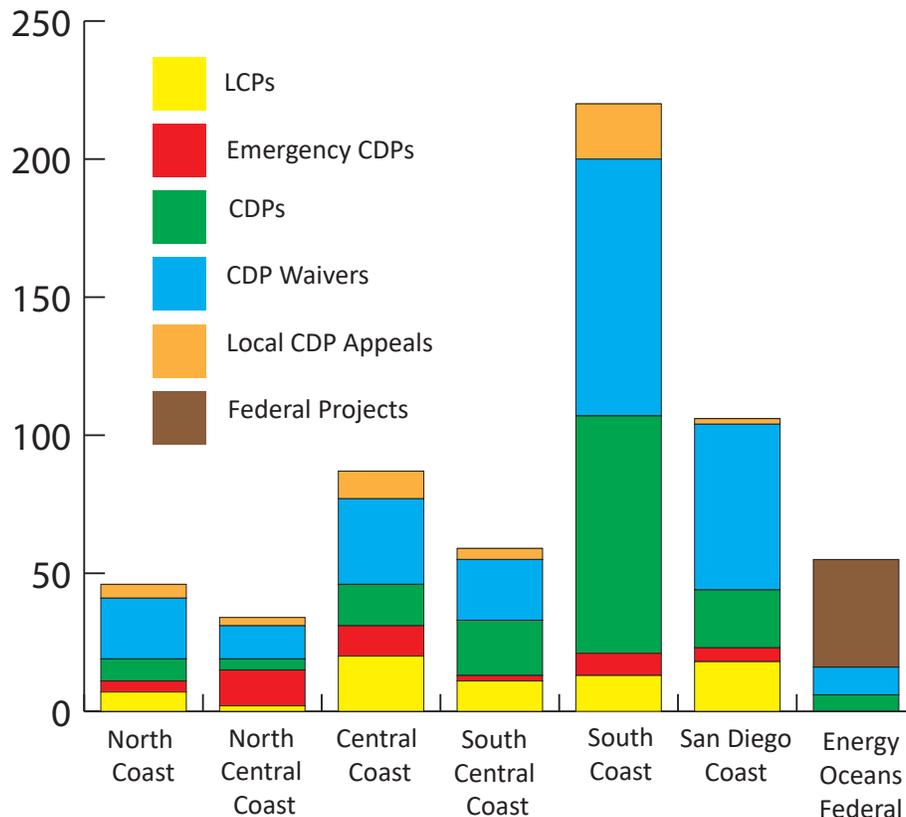
Coastal Commission District Offices

North Coast: Arcata
 North Central Coast: San Francisco
 Central Coast: Santa Cruz
 South Central Coast: Ventura
 South Coast: Long Beach
 San Diego Coast: San Diego
 Energy, Ocean & Federal: statewide

Table 1. Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) Coastal Development Permits (CDPs), Waivers & Federal Projects

Coastal Districts	LCPs	Emergency CDPs	CDPs	CDP Waivers	Local CDP Appeals	Federal Projects	Total
North Coast	7	4	8	22	5	0	46
North Central Coast	2	13	4	12	3	0	34
Central Coast	20	11	15	31	10	0	87
South Central Coast	11	2	20	22	4	0	59
South Coast	13	8	86	93	20	0	220
San Diego Coast	18	5	21	60	2	0	106
Energy, Ocean & Federal	0	0	6	10	0	39	55
Total	71	43	160	250	44	39	607

Figure 1. Commission projects by district & type



Process: Local Coastal Programs & Coastal Development Permits

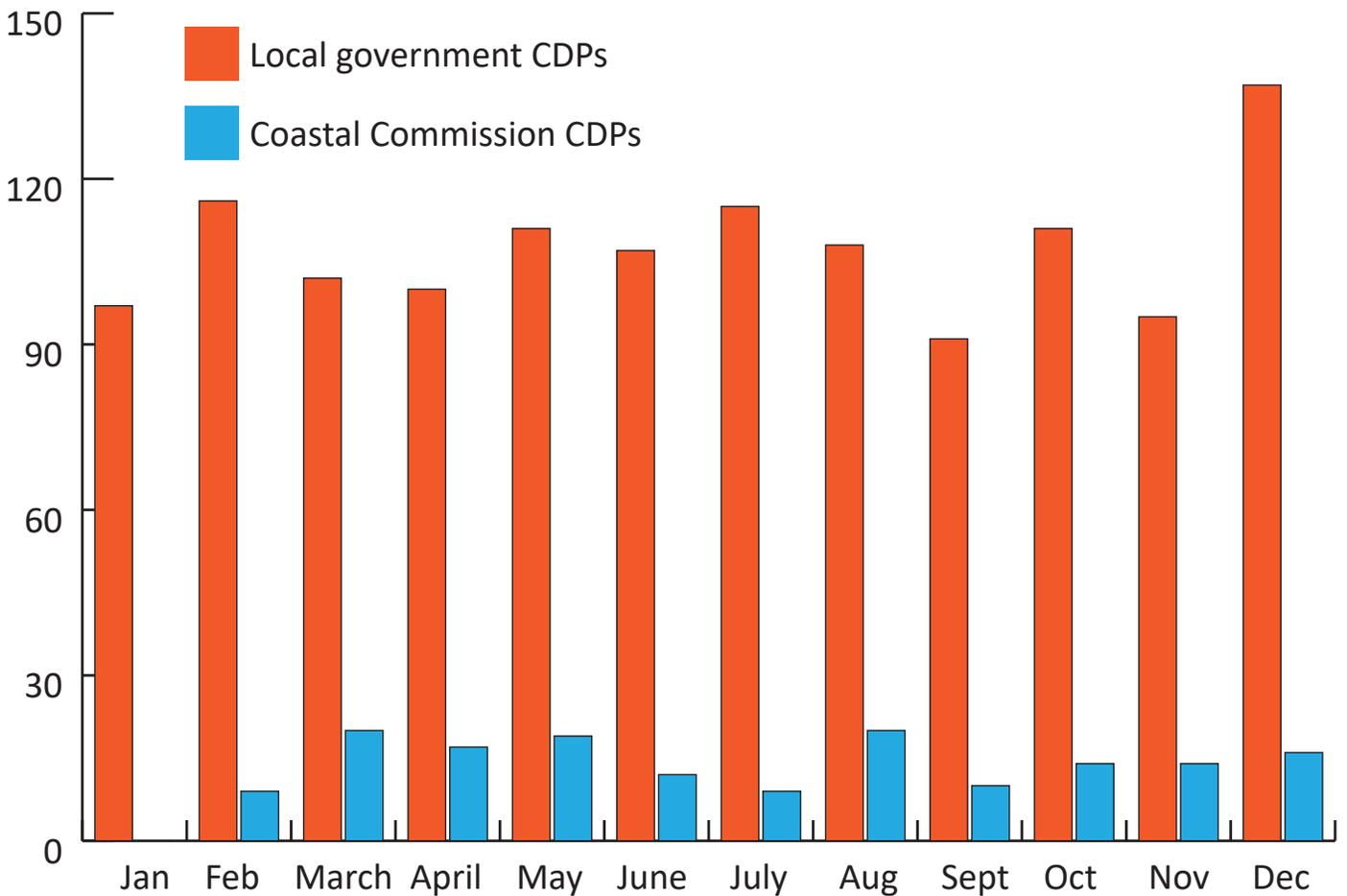
An LCP consists of a land-use plan (LUP) and an implementation plan (IP), which translate the coastal resource policies of the Coastal Act into locally specific ordinances and zoning requirements — such as setbacks, height limits, land uses, and open space — that reflect local priorities and constraints. Once the Coastal Commission has approved a city or county’s LCP, the local government is responsible for issuing most CDPs in its Coastal Zone. The Coastal Commission retains permitting authority in state waters up to three miles offshore and on most state tidelands up to the mean high-tide line, generally identified as areas with wet sand.

Local governments approved 1,290 Coastal Development Permits in 2025 — nearly 90% of all approved CDPs.

Table 2. Local versus Coastal Commission CDPs in 2025

Local CDPs	CCC CDPs	Total
1290	160	1450
89%	11%	100%

Figure 2. Local versus Coastal Commission CDPs by month in 2025



Coastal Development Permit processing times

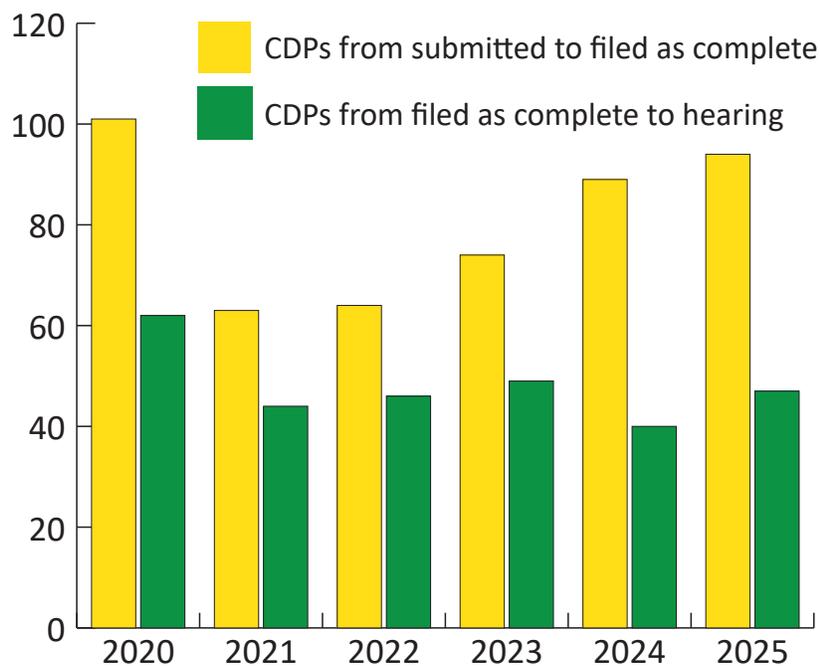
The Coastal Commission is required by the state Permit Streamlining Act (PSA) to hear permit applications within 180 calendar days of receiving a complete application for a CDP, with the option for a 90-day extension, given permission from the applicant. In 2025, the state Legislature amended the PSA to include a shorter, 90-day deadline for most housing projects and 60-day deadline for accessory dwelling units. Housing projects are eligible for the optional 90-day extension by mutual agreement. Any project that is not acted upon within the appropriate time frame is subject to automatic approval.

Most CDP applications submitted to the Coastal Commission are granted permit waivers, meaning the agency determined that the proposal will not adversely impact coastal resources, public coastal access or public recreation. The average processing time for the Coastal Commission to act on a completed CDP application was less than two months in 2025.

Table 3. Average processing times in calendar days for CDP applications 2020 to 2025*

Year	CDPs from submitted to filed as complete	CDPs from filed as complete to hearing
2025	94	47
2024	89	40
2023	74	49
2022	64	46
2021	63	44
2020	101	62

Figure 3. Average processing times in calendar days for CDP applications 2020 to 2025*



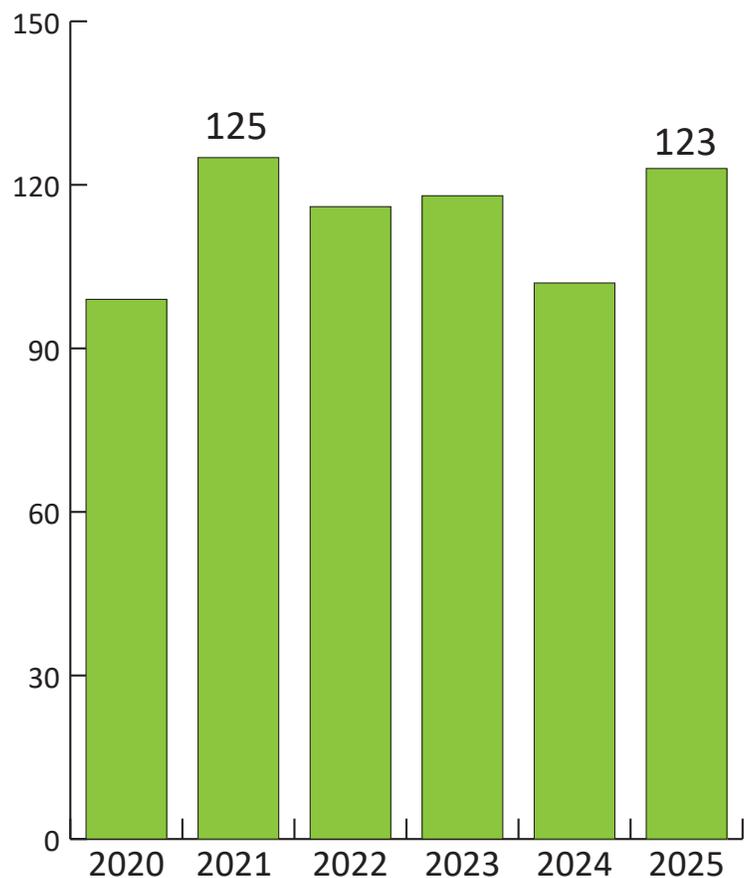
Local Coastal Program processing times

All but about 10% of the Coastal Zone is regulated by a local government with a certified LCP. Local jurisdictions use these documents as a blueprint for development and resource protection in seaside communities. A fully certified LCP includes a land-use plan (LUP), which outlines the community’s vision for growth through broad goals, programs and definitions, as well as an implementation plan (IP), which specifies how these policies will be implemented through zoning ordinances, development standards and enforceable policies.

As with other municipal planning documents, local governments periodically update their LCPs to respond to changing conditions and evolving state and local priorities. Changes to certified LCPs require Coastal Commission approval under state law. The agency must act on a request for an LCP amendment within 90 working days, with the option of a one-year extension. If a local government only submits an amendment for its implementation plan, the deadline is 60 working days, with the option of a one-year extension. In 2025, the average processing time for an LCP amendment was less than 5 months.

Table & Figure 4. Average working days to process LCP amendments 2020 to 2025*

Year	From filed as complete to hearing
2025	123
2024	102
2023	118
2022	116
2021	125
2020	99



**This year’s report includes a revision to the methodology for calculating processing times for LCPs and CDPs. To improve accuracy, the report now categorizes projects based on the year the Coastal Commission acted on them — as opposed to the year they were submitted to the Commission. This eliminates any discrepancy created when an application is submitted in one calendar year but approved in another, while continuing to ensure that all submitted projects are accounted for.*

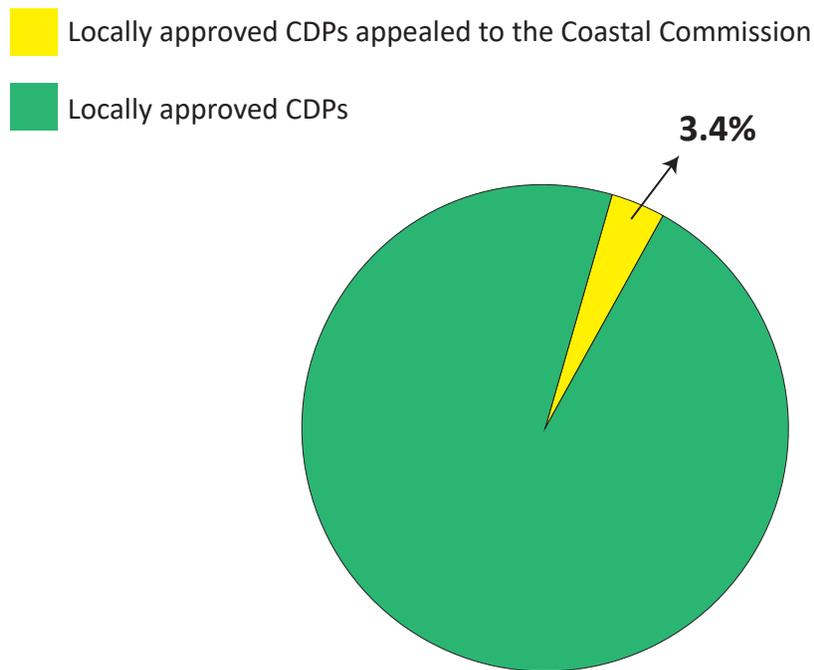
Appeals process for locally issued Coastal Development Permits

Some, but not all, CDPs approved by local governments are appealable to the Coastal Commission. Generally, projects can be appealed only if they are located between the ocean and the nearest public road, within 300 feet of a coastal bluff or within 100 feet of a wetland. Only a small fraction of appealable projects actually gets appealed.

Table 5. Locally issued CDPs by appeals status in 2025

Total	Not appealable	Appealable	Appealed
1290	767	523	44

Figure 5. Locally issued CDP appeals rate



The Coastal Commission reviews these appeals for conformance with the issuing jurisdiction’s certified LCP. The Coastal Commission is required to make an initial determination within 49 working days or obtain an agreement from the applicant (not the appellant) to extend the deadline.

For projects found to raise no substantial issue (NSI), the appeal is rejected, and the local approval stands. For those appeals that raise a substantial issue (SI), the Coastal Commission considers the project in its entirety. In this “de novo” phase of the review, the agency can either approve, deny or approve the project with additional conditions necessary for compliance.

Of the 44 appeals heard by the commission in 2025, 29 were found to raise no substantial issue, meaning more than half of the appealed projects moved forward as approved by the local jurisdiction. Another 15 were approved with conditions and four were withdrawn. None were denied.

Table 6. Locally approved CDPs by district in 2025

District	Appeals	No substantial issue	Approved with conditions	Withdrawn by applicant	Denied
North Coast	5	5	0	0	0
North Central Coast	3	3	0	1	0
Central Coast	10	8	2	1	0
South Central Coast	4	4	0	0	0
South Coast	20	8	12	2	0
San Diego Coast	2	1	1	0	0
Total	44	29	15	4	0

Actions by hearing type

More than 80% of all actions taken by the Coastal Commission in 2025 were processed with permit waivers or on the consent calendar. Only about one in five project applications were required to have a full hearing on the regular calendar.

Figure 6 Coastal Commission action by agenda calendar type

