

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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W10a

Prepared July 1, 2022 for the July 13, 2022 Meeting

TO: COASTAL COMMISSIONERS AND INTERESTED PERSONS

FROM: Jack Ainsworth, Executive Director
Shana Gray, Deputy Director
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SUBJECT: Caltrans Informational Briefing

At the July 13, 2022 Commission meeting, the Commission will be given a briefing as part of the North Coast Deputy Director's Report by Caltrans staff on their progress on preparing a comprehensive adaptation plan for protecting, relocating, or otherwise adapting the Eureka-Arcata Highway 101 Corridor improvements authorized under CDP No. 1-18-1078 to address anticipated sea level rise related flooding hazards. A previous Commission briefing on this topic was given January 13, 2021.¹

On August 7, 2019, the Commission approved CDP No. 1-18-1078 with special conditions.² The CDP authorized various safety improvements along the six-mile-long transportation corridor, including installation of median crossing closures; construction of new interchange at Indianola Cutoff; extensions of highway acceleration and deceleration lanes; replacement of southbound Jacoby Creek Bridge; replacement of bridge rails on northbound Jacoby Creek and Gannon Slough Bridges; replacement of tide gates; and other improvements.

The Commission's findings for approval recognize that most segments of the existing low-lying highway corridor are projected to experience flooding resulting from sea level rise (SLR) in the coming decades if no modifications are made to either the roadway or the surrounding dikes and railroad berm located on other properties around the highway that provide some protection to the roadway from inundation. Based on the medium high risk and extreme scenario SLR projections, the most vulnerable sections of the

¹ A link to the presentation from the January 13, 2021 briefing is accessible from the Commission's website: <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2021/1/W9a/W9a-1-2021-report.pdf>.

² The original staff report for CDP 1-18-1078 is accessible from the Commission's website: <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2019/8/W11a/W11a-8-2019-report.pdf>.

corridor are at risk of periodic (several times annually) flooding as early as 2030-2040 and more frequent (monthly or more) flooding between 2050-2070.

The Commission granted its approval of the CDP subject to certain special conditions (shown in the attached [Appendix](#)) requiring Caltrans to undertake SLR adaptation planning in the short term to inform decisions about what changes to the approved highway improvements should be made in the future to minimize the risks of flood hazard in the longer term. The special conditions require Caltrans to develop a long-term solution that integrates the adaptation for the development authorized by the CDP with the adaptation for the corridor as a whole. Furthermore, the conditions require Caltrans to submit annual monitoring reports to the Executive Director that document Caltrans' progress in developing the Comprehensive Adaptation and Implementation Plan (CAIP), and these progress updates shall be presented to the Commission, which is the reason for the July 13, 2022 briefing.

Special Condition 2 of CDP 1-18-1078 requires Caltrans to develop and submit a full CAIP for the transportation corridor by December 31, 2025 that includes, among other things, an adaptation alternatives analysis that considers accommodation strategies (viaducts, overpasses, etc.), protection measures (dikes, living shorelines, or other natural or engineered features), and relocation of the development to an area safe from flooding and other coastal hazards. To inform the preparation and development of the CAIP and to track the progress of SLR and the occurrence of flooding events to ensure timely submittal of the CAIP, Special Condition 1 requires Caltrans to undertake SLR monitoring and reporting for the Highway 101 corridor. The Baseline Report and 2020-2022 Annual Monitoring Reports are attached ([Exhibits](#)).

At the July 13, 2022 meeting, the Commission will be invited to offer comments on the latest reporting and information presented by Caltrans regarding its progress to date on monitoring, reporting, and planning for SLR in the Eureka-Arcata Highway 101 Corridor.