

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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DATE: MAY 13, 2026

TO: Coastal Commission and Interested Persons

FROM: Kate Huckelbridge, Executive Director
Sarah Christie, Legislative Director
Sean Drake, Legislative Manager

SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE REPORT FOR MAY 2026

CONTENTS: This report provides summaries and status of bills affecting the Coastal Commission and the California Coastal Management Program, and other coast-related legislation identified by staff.

Note: Information contained in this report is accurate as of May 8, 2026. Bills added since the previous report are marked by an asterisk (*). Substantive amendments are summarized in *italics*. Bill text, votes, analyses, and the current status of any bill may be viewed on the California Legislature's Homepage at <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/>. This report can also be accessed through the Commission's homepage at www.coastal.ca.gov.

2026 Legislative Calendar

Jan 1	Statutes take effect.
Jan 5	Legislature reconvenes.
Jan 10	Budget Bill must be submitted by Governor.
Jan 16	Last day for policy committees to hear and report to fiscal committees fiscal bills introduced in that house in 2025.
Jan 23	Last day for committees to hear and report to the Floor bills introduced in that house in 2025.
Jan 31	Last day for each house to pass bills introduced in that house in 2025.
Feb 20	Last day for bills to be introduced.
Mar 26	Spring Recess begins upon adjournment.
Apr 6	Legislature reconvenes from Spring Recess.
Apr 24	Last day for policy committees to hear and report fiscal bills introduced in that house.

May 1	Last day for policy committees to hear and report non-fiscal bills introduced in that house.
May 15	Last day for fiscal committees to hear and report to the Floor bills introduced in that house.
May 26-29	Floor session only.
May 29	Last day for each house to pass bills introduced in that house.
June 1	Committee meetings may resume.
June 15	Budget Bill must be passed by midnight.
June 25	Last day for legislative measures to qualify for the November 3 General Election ballot.
July 2	Last day for policy committees to meet and report bills. Summer Recess begins upon adjournment.
Aug 3	Legislature reconvenes from Summer Recess.
Aug 14	Last day for fiscal committees to meet and report bills to the Floor.
Aug 17-31	Floor session only.
Aug 21	Last day to amend bills on the Floor.
Aug 31	Last day for each house to pass bills. Recess begins upon adjournment.
Sept 30	Last day for Governor to sign or veto bills.
Nov 3	General Election
Dec 7	Convening of the 2027-28 legislation session.

PRIORITY LEGISLATION

COASTAL ACT AMENDMENTS

[AB 1740 \(Zbur\) Coastal resources: coastal development permits: Santa Monica](#)

This bill would create a process for coastal cities to self-certify as “urban multimodal communities,” a designation created by the bill. In any urban multimodal community, numerous project types—including but not limited to housing, transportation projects, removal of public parking, and expansion of existing structures—would be exempt from the Coastal Act and Local Coastal Programs. Separately, the bill would also exempt from the Coastal Act any project to reconfigure a state highway, including the relocation or removal of public parking, so long as the project includes installation of a bicycle lane. *Amendments of 04/06/25 expand the bill to unincorporated county areas that meet certain criteria; exclude from the proposed exemptions any projects adjacent to the shoreline, wetlands, and sensitive habitat; add film productions to the list of exempt project types; and limit the state highway project exemption to allow for relocation but not removal of parking. Amendments of 04/15/26 shrink the geographic scope of the bill to just the City of Santa Monica, and would apply the bill’s exemptions to the City’s coastal zone until 2037.*

Introduced	02/05/26
Last Amended	04/27/26
Status	Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)
Position	Oppose Unless Amended

AB 2254 (Addis) Coastal resources: local coastal program: monarch butterfly habitat

As amended, this bill would require the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Coastal Commission, by January 1, 2028, to identify monarch butterfly overwintering habitat sites in the coastal zone and current local government monarch butterfly overwintering habitat management plans or policies. The bill would also require CDFW and the Commission, by July 1, 2028, to develop guidance for local governments on model land use policies, including LCP policies, to protect and enhance monarch butterfly overwintering habitat. The bill require any coastal local government with identified monarch butterfly overwintering habitat within its coastal zone, whenever it next amends its LCP, to include monarch butterfly overwintering habitat protection policies.

Introduced 02/19/26
Last Amended 04/08/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

AB 2373 (Dixon) California Coastal Act: local coastal program: sea level rise plan: neighborhood-scale adaptation approach

This bill would add language to the Coastal Act explicitly authorizing local governments to use a “neighborhood-scale adaptation approach” when developing sea level rise policies and implementation measures for their local coastal programs. Neighborhood-scale adaptation approaches could include identification of specific areas and assets that are subject to the approach, and policies that reflect the shared planning features and adaptation strategies for different areas or development types based on the geophysical and land use characteristics. Amendments of 04/22/26 would require neighborhood-scale adaptation strategies to prioritize nature-based solutions.

Introduced 02/19/26
Last Amended 04/22/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

AB 2410 (Ellis) Wildfire safety: fuels reduction projects: California Environmental Quality Act: California Coastal Act

As amended, this bill would add specified types of wildfire fuel reduction projects to the list of development over which the Coastal Commission retains permitting jurisdiction notwithstanding a local coastal program. The bill would also exempt these types of fuel reduction projects from the Coastal Act until 2030, and would create a similar exemption within the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The bill would additionally require the Commission to submit a report to the Legislature by January 2028 with information about Commission and local government approvals of fuel reduction projects in the coastal zone from 2020 through 2026.

Introduced 02/20/26
Last Amended 04/22/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

AB 2791 (Assembly Natural Resources Committee) Public resources

Relevant to the Coastal Commission, this bill would make non-substantive, technical amendments to various sections of the Coastal Act, including cleaning up outdated references to the California State University and Colleges (now the California State University), and adding clarifying cross-references to existing statutory definitions.

Introduced 03/17/26
Status Senate Rules Committee

SB 675 (Padilla) California Environmental Quality Act: environmental development leadership projects: streamlining

As amended, this bill would establish a new, truncated Coastal Act review process for a “Waterfront Environmental Development Leadership Project” (WELDP). The definition of a WELDP would apply specifically to the proposed Seaport San Diego project at the Port of San Diego. The bill would require the Commission to review and comment within 60 days on any project documents submitted to the Commission prior to the Port’s certification of a project EIR; any objections not raised at that time would be deemed waived. The bill would also require the Commission, within 30 days of receiving a proposed Port Master Plan (PMP) amendment for the Seaport San Diego project, to provide the Port with a list of all technical documents needed for the Commission to act on the amendment. The Commission would be required to take final action on the PMP amendment within 90 days of receiving those documents. The bill would further require the Commission to take final action on any CDP appeal for the Seaport San Diego project within 180 days. The bill also would prohibit the Commission from imposing conditions on any appealed CDP for the Seaport San Diego project that are not “objectively necessary” to render the project consistent with the PMP and the Coastal Act, and that render the project infeasible.

Introduced 02/21/25
Last Amended 07/07/25
Status Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Position Oppose

SB 681 (Wahab) Housing

This bill is the Senate housing omnibus bill. Relevant to the Coastal Commission, the bill would require the Commission, by July 1, 2027, to create a process for electronic submittal to the Commission of any application required under the Coastal Act. *Amendments of 05/23/25 would prohibit local approvals of multi-unit residential projects from being appealed to the Commission on the basis that the project is located in a sensitive coastal resource area or is not the principally permitted use of the site; and would require the Commission to submit an annual report to the Legislature with information about CDP appeals of multi-unit residential projects.*

Introduced 02/21/25
Last Amended 05/23/25
Status Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee

SB 741 (Blakespear) Coastal resources: coastal development permit: exemption: Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor

This bill would amend the Coastal Act to specify that whenever an emergency is declared by a local government or special district, development in that jurisdiction is entitled to an Emergency Coastal Development Permit under Public Resources Code Section 30624. *Amendments of 04/21/25 revise the bill to, instead, expand the existing Coastal Act exemption for like-for-like emergency repairs to state highways, to also apply to like-for-like repairs to train tracks and associated facilities along the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor.*

Introduced 02/21/25
Last Amended 04/21/25
Status Assembly Natural Resources Committee

SB 963 (Laird) California Coastal Act of 1976: coastal development permits: appeal: de novo review

This bill would establish deadlines by which the Commission must review and take final action on local CDP appeals that raise a substantial issue. Under the bill, upon finding that an appeal raises a substantial issue, within 30 days the Commission would be required to review the local permit record for the project and provide the applicant with a complete list of what additional information, if any, is needed to hold a de novo hearing and take final action on the project. Once all the originally requested information is received by the Commission, the Commission would be required to hold the de novo hearing and take final action on the project within 180 days.

Introduced 02/03/26
Last Amended 03/09/26
Status Assembly Rules Committee
Position Support (recommended)

SB 1229 (Allen) Coastal resources: coastal development permits: disaster exemption

This bill would limit the applicability of the coastal development permit exemption for rebuilding a structure destroyed by a natural disaster to the property owner of record immediately preceding the disaster. *Amendments of 03/25/26 specify that the exemption would still apply to subsequent purchasers if the post-disaster replacement structure does not encroach on state tidelands, sensitive habitat or habitat buffers, public access or open space easements, or bluff setbacks.*

Introduced 02/19/26
Last Amended 04/09/26
Status Senate Floor

SB 1318 (Allen) Coastal resources: local coastal program: coastal development permit: non-owner-occupied short-term rentals

This bill would require the Commission to approve any Coastal Development Permit (CDP) or Local Coastal Program (LCP) amendment restricting unhosted short-term rentals, regardless of the availability of other visitor-serving accommodations.

Amendments of 04/27/26 reframe the bill to require the Commission, notwithstanding the public coastal access policies of the Coastal Act, to approve any CDP or LCP amendment restricting unhosted short-term rentals if (1) the local government found that the restriction or prohibition is necessary to address significant local housing needs, and (2) the Commission determines that the CDP or LCP amendments strikes a reasonable balance between local housing needs and public coastal access.

Introduced 02/20/26
Last Amended 04/27/26
Status Senate Appropriations Committee

SB 1433 (Committee on Judiciary) Maintenance of the codes

This bill would make non-substantive, technical amendments to Sections 30166, 30168, and 30600.5 of the Coastal Act.

Introduced 03/05/26
Status Assembly Judiciary Committee

PUBLIC ACCESS

AB 1938 (Irwin) Coastal recreation: designated state surfing reserves

This bill would require the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), on or before July 1, 2027, to establish criteria and an application process for purposes of designating an area of the coastline as a “state surfing reserve.” Eligibility criteria may include a letter of recommendation from the Coastal Commission. The bill would authorize a local government to, after adopting a formal resolution, apply to OPC for purposes of designating an area of the coastline as a state surfing reserve. The bill would further establish a process for OPC to approve and notify the public of state surfing reserves, and would require OPC to include designated surfing reserves in the state’s 30x30 goal. *Amendments of 03/25/26 remove the provision regarding a letter of recommendation from the Commission, remove the provision requiring OPC to count surfing reserves toward the state’s 30x30 goal, and make other clarifying revisions.*

Introduced 02/13/26
Last Amended 03/25/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

AB 1976 (Wicks) Streets and highways: pedestrian and bicycle facilities

This bill would amend state Pedestrian Mall Law to eliminate the notice and hearing procedures for the establishment of a pedestrian mall, and would instead authorize any local government to adopt a resolution or ordinance to establish a pedestrian mall, in which vehicular parking would be prohibited. Relevant to the Coastal Commission, the bill would declare that establishment of a pedestrian mall to be consistent with the public access requirements of the Coastal Act, and would also exempt from CEQA the establishment or expansion of a pedestrian mall. Separately, the bill would prohibit local governments from holding a community meeting to gather public input on a proposed pedestrian or bicycle safety project after the project has been included in the circulation element of the local government's general plan; would prohibit local governments from terminating pedestrian or bicycle projects except in certain circumstances. *Amendments of 04/27/26 would recast the provisions of the bill that would have replaced portions of Pedestrian Mall Law to, instead, provide an alternative process within the statute.*

Introduced 02/13/26
Last Amended 04/27/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee

AB 2356 (Ramos) State parks: Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation: Tolowa Dunes State Park

This bill would direct the Department of General Services to transfer all land in Tolowa Dunes State Park, located in coastal Del Norte County, to the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation at no cost, and to terminate any and all rights held by the state regarding those lands.

Introduced 02/19/26
Last Amended 03/23/26
Status Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee. Failed deadline for passage.

AB 2734 (Hart) Vehicles: special interest license plates

As amended, this bill would shift the revenue allocation for the Whale Tail License Plate so that 100% of the monies support coastal access, marine education, coastal stewardship and local assistance grant programs provided by the California Coastal Commission (CCC) and the State Coastal Conservancy. The bill would direct the Department of Motor Vehicles to deposit one half of total revenues generated by annual plate sales, renewals, replacement and personalization of Whale Tail Plates into the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account to support the Coastal Commission's Whale Tail Grant program and public education, and one half into the State Coastal Conservancy Fund (CCF) to support Explore the Coast grants.

Introduced 02/20/26
Last Amended 04/06/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)
Position Support

NATURAL RESOURCES

AB 1448 (Hart) Coastal resources: California Coastal Sanctuary: tidelands and submerged lands: oil and gas development

As amended, this bill would repeal existing statutory language authorizing the State Lands Commission to enter into leases for oil and gas extraction in state waters under certain circumstances. The bill would also prohibit existing oil and gas leases in state waters from being used to support Pacific Outer Continental Shelf leases issued after January 1, 2026.

Introduced	02/21/25
Last Amended	04/28/26
Status	Senate Floor

AB 1536 (Addis) Offshore oil: pipeline safety

As amended, this bill would make multiple statutory changes intended to increase oil pipeline safety. The bill would require any idled or inactive pipeline that has previously spilled 10,000 gallons or more of oil to be decommissioned, and would require the operator to restore the site to its natural condition. The bill would also make any repaired pipeline near environmentally sensitive areas in the coastal zone subject to the requirement to use best available technology based on a risk analysis conducted by an independent expert, rather than the operator; would require that analysis to address oil spill prevention; and would require an operator seeking approval for a new well, production facility, or pipeline in the coastal zone to submit an oil leak detection and response plan to the Geologic Energy Management Division for approval.

Introduced	01/05/26
Last Amended	04/15/26
Status	Assembly Emergency Management Committee. Failed deadline for passage.

AB 1548 (Pellerin) Conservation: Monterey Bay Area Stewardship Authority

This bill would establish the Monterey Bay Area Stewardship Authority, a regional entity with jurisdiction extending throughout the Monterey Bay region. The bill would provide that the purpose of the authority is to raise and allocate public and private funds for restoring, enhancing, protecting, engaging in long term stewardship, and improving access for the enjoyment of natural and working lands. The bill would require the Authority's nine-member governing board to, among other things, establish policies for operation of the Authority, and to convene an advisory committee to assist and advise the board in carrying out its functions. The bill would also authorize the Authority to receive and to award grants, levy taxes, issue bonds, and enter into joint powers agreements. *Amendments of 04/15/26 made minor, clarifying changes.*

Introduced	01/07/26
Last Amended	04/15/26
Status	Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

AB 2099 (M. González) Advertising displays: customary maintenance

This bill would create a definition of “customary maintenance” for billboards in the Outdoor Advertising Act that would include fortification of a billboard structure with stronger materials. The effect would be to expand the universe of activities that are exempt from local or state review, extending the life of billboards, including those in sensitive natural habitats, cultural resource sites, or designated scenic corridors.

Introduced 02/18/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

AB 2647 (Calderon) Energy: nuclear facilities: advanced nuclear reactors

This bill would specify that the prohibition on new nuclear powerplants in California does not apply to an “advanced nuclear reactor” that has enhanced safety features, reduced waste generation, improved fuel use, and other technological advancements. *Amendments of 04/16/26 strike the original bill language and would instead require the Energy Commission, by July 2027, to prepare an assessment of the potential role for advanced nuclear powerplants to cost-effectively meet statewide needs for new electricity resources.*

Introduced 02/25/26
Last Amended 04/16/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

ACR 149/SCR 136 (Hart, Laird) California Coastal Act of 1976: State Coastal Conservancy

This Assembly Concurrent Resolution and Senate Concurrent Resolution would commemorate the 50th anniversary of the passage of both the California Coastal Act and the State Coastal Conservancy Act, as well as the significant coastal conservation, public access, restoration, and sustainable development achievements the state has achieved through both statutes.

Introduced 02/25/26
Status Assembly/Senate Floor

SB 10 (Padilla) Otay Mesa East Toll Facility Act: toll revenues

This bill would authorize revenues generated by the Otay Mesa East Toll Facility to be used to fund maintenance of the South Bay International Boundary and Water Commission sewage treatment facility pursuant to an agreement with the federal government. *Amendments of 03/13/25 add that toll revenues may also be used to fund development of additional sanitation infrastructure projects related to the Tijuana River.*

Introduced 12/02/25
Last Amended 03/13/25
Status Assembly Transportation Committee

SB 949 (Becker) Environmental protection: Natural Resources Agency: resource of statewide significance: Santa Cruz Mountains

As amended, this bill would declare the Santa Cruz Mountains to be a resource of statewide significance that requires special protection. The bill would require the Natural Resources Agency to encourage collaborative stewardship approaches to protect, restore, and preserve the natural ecosystems of, and public access to, the region.

Introduced 02/02/26
Last Amended 03/25/26
Status Assembly Rules Committee

SEA LEVEL RISE

AB 2051 (Wicks) Public resources: Coastal Resilience Permitting Working Group

This bill would require the Secretaries of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection to convene a working group to develop a permitting roadmap for coastal resilience projects along the coast and the San Francisco Bay shoreline by January 1, 2028. The working group would consist of representatives from federal, state, and local agencies, including, among others, the Coastal Commission and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). The bill would also require the Coastal Commission and BCDC, by April 1, 2027, to convene an advisory group of agencies, industries, and other constituencies to support the working group. *Amendments of 03/25/26 would make the Natural Resources Agency responsible for convening the advisory group, and make other clarifying revisions to the bill.*

Introduced 02/18/26
Last Amended 03/25/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

SB 1324 (Blakespear) Passenger and freight rail: LOSSAN Rail Corridor: working group report

This bill would extend the deadline for the multiagency Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor working group to submit to the Legislature a report containing consensus recommendations for ensuring the long-term viability of the rail corridor, from February 2026 to February 2027.

Introduced 02/20/26
Last Amended 03/23/26
Status Assembly Rules Committee

HOUSING

AB 1294 (Haney) Planning and zoning: housing development: standardized application form

As amended, this bill would require the Department of Housing and Community Development to adopt a standardized application form that applicants for any housing project may use, and would require a local government to accept the standardized application form or a similar standardized form created by the local government. The bill would prohibit local governments from requiring submission of any other application form beside the standardized application form as part of entitling a housing project. The bill would also prohibit local governments from requiring any additional information or process before entitling a housing project, including preapplication submissions, approvals, reviews, meetings, public notices, or other preapplication requirements.

Introduced	02/21/25
Last Amended	04/28/26
Status	Senate Local Government Committee

AB 1953 (Lowenthal) Short-term rentals: emergencies and special events

This bill would require the state Office of Emergency Services and the Office of Tourism to establish a public registration system of short-term rentals statewide. The bill would prohibit any state or local agency from regulating the operation of any registered short-term rental during a declared state of emergency or special event. The bill would require the Office of Tourism to define specific special event periods and to post that information online at least 180 days prior to the event.

Introduced	02/13/26
Last Amended	03/19/26
Status	Assembly Economic Development, Growth, and Housing Impact Committee. Failed deadline for passage.

AB 2433 (Alvarez) Housing development: density bonus

This bill would make an array of changes to state Density Bonus Law, including renaming it to the "Affordable Homes Bonus Program"; making density bonus projects subject to by-right, ministerial approval; increasing the number of development incentives and concessions that an applicant is eligible to receive; and affirming that the granting of a waiver or reduction of development standards shall not require or be interpreted to require a general plan amendment, local coastal plan amendment, zoning change, or other discretionary approval. *Amendments of 03/26/26 specify that a density bonus project shall be subject to by-right, ministerial approval if it meets certain siting, affordability, and labor standards. Amendments of 04/22/26 clarify that the proposed ministerial approval process does not alter application of the Coastal Act.*

Introduced	02/20/26
Last Amended	04/22/26
Status	Assembly Appropriations Committee

SB 677 (Wiener) Housing development: transit-oriented development

As amended, this bill would clarify that for purposes of streamlining of transit-oriented development pursuant to SB 79 (Ch. 512, Stats. 2025), *“high-frequency commuter rail” means a public commuter or intercity rail station with a total of at least 48 passenger trains on average per weekday across all directions, not including temporary service changes of less than one month or unplanned disruptions, and not meeting the standard for very high frequency commuter rail, at any point in the past three years.*

Introduced 02/21/25
Last Amended 01/08/26
Status Assembly Rules Committee

SB 1116 (Caballero) Planning and zoning: housing development projects: subdivisions

This bill would amend the portion of Planning and Zoning Law that provides for local ministerial approval of certain subdivisions resulting in 10 or fewer parcels, including relaxing the requirement that the site be surrounded by urban uses, decreasing the minimum parcel size, and prohibiting a local government from imposing front or internal setbacks or other standards that would preclude the construction of the number of residential units allowed on the parcel under Planning and Zoning Law. *Amendments of 04/06/26 would require every local government to submit its subdivision ordinance to the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) within 60 days after adoption for HCD to evaluate the ordinance’s compliance with law; and delays the effective date of several provisions of the bill to January 1, 2027. Amendments of 04/15/26 would make void and unenforceable any covenant, restriction, or condition contained in any deed or other instrument that prohibits a housing development project homes on lots that meet the criteria for ministerial approval of a subdivision.*

Introduced 02/17/26
Last Amended 04/23/26
Status Senate Appropriations Committee

ADMINISTRATIVE

AB 35 (Alvarez) Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024: Administrative Procedure Act: exemption: program guidelines and selection criteria

As amended, this bill would exempt the development and adoption of program guidelines and selection criteria needed to effectuate or implement the programs included in the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 ("Prop 4") from the Administrative Procedures Act (APA), in line with the APA exemption provided in the past natural resource general obligation bonds. This bill has an urgency clause.

Introduced 12/02/24
Last Amended 01/14/26
Status Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee

AB 880 (Bennett) State governments grants and contracts: payment of claims and grantees' indirect costs

This bill would establish that existing statutory penalty for late payment of a grant by a state agency also apply to grant agreements between a state agency and a non-profit organization. This bill would require a state agency administering a grant program to reimburse a grantee's indirect costs at specified rates as requested by the grantee in their grant program application, unless prohibited by any other state or federal law.

Introduced 02/19/25
Status Senate Appropriations Committee

AB 1039 (Hart) State-funded assistance grants and contracts: advance payments

The bill would require any state agency that administers a grant program to advance payment to a qualifying recipient for all grants advertised after January 1, 2026. The bill would require the solicitation for the grant to state the percentage of the grant funds that may be distributed as an advance payment. *Amendments of 06/18/25 would require any state agency that administers a grant program to consider utilizing advance payment best practices and processes identified and developed by the Strategic Growth Council.*

Introduced 02/20/25
Last Amended 06/18/25
Status Senate Appropriations Committee

AB 1593 (Dixon) State agencies: revenue: report

This bill would require any state agency that imposes monetary charges, including a regulatory fee or administrative penalty, to report the revenue generated from those charges on its internet website. *Amendments of 03/23/26 would require the reports to be made available for download in machine-readable format.*

Introduced 01/15/26
Last Amended 03/23/26
Status Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

AB 2366 (Ávila Farías) Administrative Procedure Act: proposed regulations: cost-of-living impact on residents of the state

This bill would make multiple changes to the state Administrative Procedure Act to require any proposed change in state agency regulations to analyze the impact of the regulation on cost of living.

Introduced	02/19/26
Status	Assembly Appropriations Committee (suspense file)

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CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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BILL ANALYSIS

[SB 963 \(Laird\)](#)

As Amended 3/9/26

SUMMARY

This bill would establish deadlines by which the Commission must review and take final action on local Coastal Development Permit (CDP) appeals that raise a substantial issue. The bill would also establish basic requirements for an appellant to properly file an appeal of a local CDP.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the Commission **SUPPORT** SB 963, and I recommend a **YES** vote.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of the bill is to provide greater regulatory certainty regarding how the Commission processes appeals of local CDPs.

EXISTING AND RELATED LAW

Coastal Act Section 30603 lists the types of developments for which a local CDP may be appealed to the Commission. As amended by AB 130 (Ch. 22, Stats. 2025), local CDPs for residential development projects of four or more units cannot be appealed to the Commission on the basis that the development is located in a sensitive coastal resource area or is not the principally permitted use of the parcel.

Relevant to this bill, Coastal Act Sections 30603, 30621, and 30625 jointly require the Commission to provide for a de novo public hearing on any appeal of a local CDP action that raises a substantial issue regarding the proposed development's conformity with the policies of the certified Local Coastal Program or the public access policies of the Coastal Act.

Government Code Section 66329(c) prohibits local CDPs for accessory dwelling units from being appealed to the Commission.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Under the Coastal Act, all new development in the coastal zone must receive a CDP or other similar approval to ensure that the development is carried out consistent with Coastal Act policies, which protect coastal resources and public coastal access. The Coastal Commission is responsible for issuing CDPs for all new development in a local government's coastal zone until and unless the local government prepares and submits a Local Coastal Program (LCP) that is certified by the Commission. Once a local government's LCP is certified by the Commission, the local government assumes responsibility for permitting most new development in its coastal zone pursuant to the policies of its LCP.

In certain portions of the coastal zone—primarily near the shoreline and other sensitive areas—CDPs that are approved by a local government may be appealed to the Commission. When an appeal is filed, the Commission must hold a public hearing within 49 days to determine whether the appeal raises a “substantial issue” (SI) with respect to the project’s consistency with the certified LCP or the public access policies of the Coastal Act. If the Commission finds no substantial issue (NSI), the appeal is dismissed and the local decision stands. If the Commission finds that the appeal raises a substantial issue, the Commission takes jurisdiction over the permit and holds a “de novo” hearing on the project. The de novo hearing may be held at the same time as the SI hearing, or it may be scheduled for a later date if the Commission needs additional information in order to make a decision. There is no statutory deadline for how quickly the Commission must hold a de novo hearing on an appeal following its finding that the appeal raises a substantial issue.

Appeals to the Coastal Commission of local CDPs make up a small percentage of the total annual permitting activity in the coastal zone. On average, less than 4% of local CDP actions are appealed to the Commission, and more than half of those appeals are dismissed within 49 days as not raising a substantial issue. Of the appeals that the Commission finds do raise a substantial issue, many can be quickly addressed and approved through basic project modifications to resolve the issue. For example, 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 government. Of the 15 appeals that the Commission found raised a substantial issue, all 15 were subsequently approved by the Commission with conditions to resolve the identified LCP inconsistencies. None were denied.

ANALYSIS

While appeals of local CDPs are relatively rare, and most are resolved quickly, some appeals that do raise a substantial issue can require extended timeframes to resolve, for a variety of reasons. Sometimes applicants are not interested in exploring potential design modifications that would resolve the project’s inconsistencies with the LCP. In other instances, both the Commission and the applicant may have limited bandwidth, potentially slowing the resolution process. The core issues of an appeal may also be complex, requiring time to complete one or more technical analyses (e.g., wetland delineations, geological stability analyses, sea level rise vulnerability assessments) necessary for informed decision-making.

While such longstanding appeals are rare, they have led to the perception that CDP appeals are common and routinely take years to resolve. This perception and its root cause—the lack of a deadline for the Commission to hold a de novo hearing on an appeal after finding that it raises a substantial issue—risks having a chilling effect on development in appealable areas of the coastal zone. Of particular concern, uncertainty around the de novo portion of the appeal process could discourage affordable housing developers, for whom the entitlement process is uniquely fraught, from pursuing projects in the coastal zone.

SB 963 would eliminate this uncertainty around the CDP appeal process by establishing clear deadlines by which the Commission must review and take final action on appeals that raise a substantial issue. Under the current language of the bill, upon finding that an appeal raises a substantial issue, within 30 days the Commission would be required to review the permit record for the appealed project and provide the applicant with a complete list of what additional information, if any, is needed to hold a de novo hearing and take final action on the project. Once all the originally requested information is received by the Commission, the Commission would be required to hold the de novo hearing and take final action on the project within 180 days.

This proposed procedure largely resembles the Commission's informal practice for processing appeals that raise a substantial issue. However, codifying concrete deadlines for requesting and reviewing information and holding the de novo hearing would standardize this process in statute for the benefit of the regulated community. While establishing such mandatory deadlines would give the Commission less flexibility to take the time necessary to resolve certain complex LCP inconsistencies or to work with less responsive applicants, this constraint would be counterbalanced by the positive benefit of providing greater regulatory certainty around CDP appeals and, in doing so, dispelling any chilling effect such uncertainty has on development in the coastal zone. The bill would accomplish this with deadlines that are anticipated to be workable under current Commission staffing levels.

Separately, the bill would also codify basic requirements for how to properly file an appeal of a local CDP. These requirements—such as requiring the appellant to use the Commission's written appeal form, and to identify the specific features of the approved project that are allegedly inconsistent with the LCP or the public access policies of the Coastal Act—would benefit appellants, applicants, and the Commission. Appellants would benefit from having clearer statutory guidance on how to properly file an appeal of a local CDP, applicants would benefit from having additional statutory protection from their CDP being subject to frivolous appeals, and the Commission would benefit from not having to expend additional staff time interpreting poorly composed appeals. These common-sense provisions will provide a measure of further clarity to the initial stage of the appeal process.

CONCLUSION

SB 963 would establish clear deadlines by which the Commission must take action on local CDP appeals that raise a substantial issue, and it would codify basic requirements for how to properly file an appeal of a local CDP action. Although appeals of locally approved CDPs to the Commission are relatively uncommon, the processes created by the bill would increase regulatory certainty for those projects, with deadlines that are workable under current Commission staffing levels. These clarifications would help prevent perceived uncertainty about the appeals process from having a chilling effect on development in the coastal zone.

SB 963 (Laird) Analysis

SUPPORT

Azul

Bay Area Council

California Apartment Association

California Coastal Protection Network

Environmental Action Committee of West Marin

Pacific Legal Foundation

Save Our Shores

Surfrider Foundation

OPPOSITION

None on file.

RECOMMENDED POSITION

Staff recommends that the Commission **SUPPORT** SB 963.