



DATE: July 30, 2024

TO: Responsible and Trustee Agencies
Interested Parties and Organizations

FROM: Stefanie Cervantes, AICP, Acting Deputy Director
City of Pacifica

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the proposed Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project and a Scoping Meeting on August 22, 2024

REVIEW PERIOD: July 31, 2024 to August 30, 2024

The City of Pacifica's Community Development Department, Planning Division (hereafter "Planning Department"), is the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project. The City of Pacifica (City) is the project sponsor, and will also lead Project planning and design. The proposed Project, its location, and potential environmental effects are described below. Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15060, the Planning Department has determined that an EIR is required for the Project.

Public agencies and members of the general public are invited to provide comments in writing as to the scope and content of the EIR. Specifically, the Planning Department desires to know the views of Responsible and Trustee Agencies as to the potentially significant environmental issues, reasonable alternatives, and mitigation measures that are germane to each agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed Project. Responsible Agencies will need to use the EIR prepared by the Planning Department when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed Project.

Responses must be received by the Planning Department at the earliest possible date, but no later than the close of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) review period, which runs as follows: July 31, 2024 through August 30, 2024. Please send written responses to Stefanie Cervantes at the address shown below. Public agencies providing comments are requested to include a contact person for the agency.

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT:

Stefanie Cervantes, AICP, Planning Department
170 Maria Avenue
Pacifica, CA 94044
Email: scervantes@pacificagov
Phone: (650) 738-7341

Background

The City is proposing a multi-benefit coastal resiliency project along Beach Boulevard, which aims to protect public infrastructure, recreational activities, and the community at large from coastal hazards. Beach Boulevard is an approximately 0.5-mile public road that provides vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access to and along the Pacifica coast, including to homes, parks, the beach, and Pacifica Municipal Pier. Beach Boulevard also serves as an important utility corridor, containing underground water, sewer, stormwater, gas, and electrical infrastructure that serves the broader Sharp Park community. Beach Boulevard is currently protected from coastal hazards, such as erosion and wave forces, by a seawall constructed in the 1980s. The existing seawall is nearing the end of its functional life, having experienced failures in multiple locations, and presents a public health and safety risk for the City.

In 2021, the City completed a Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment (MHRA) for the Project.¹ The MHRA evaluates the range of risks from natural hazards to the Beach Boulevard seawall and associated assets. The study found that the Beach Boulevard corridor is particularly susceptible to impacts from coastal flooding, coastal erosion, and earthquake hazards, and that these hazards present considerable risks for infrastructure, public safety, the natural environment, and the local economy. The MHRA also found that the coastal hazards and their anticipated effects would be compounded by future sea-level rise.

The City drew upon the findings of the MHRA to develop and analyze a range of potential alternatives to the existing Beach Boulevard seawall.² The alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis included no project (i.e., no action); construction of a large sandy beach (“beach nourishment”) to buffer against coastal hazards; construction of a new seawall; construction of a large rock slope along the shore (“rock revetment”); and a combination of beach nourishment with construction of offshore structures to capture and stabilize sand (“beach nourishment with sand retention”). Each of the alternatives was evaluated and scored for technical performance, cost, and environmental considerations. Based on the results of the initial scoring and public input regarding the five alternatives listed above, the City also developed and evaluated a sixth alternative that included elements of the beach nourishment and seawall alternatives. This sixth “hybrid” alternative scored the highest among evaluated alternatives and was selected by the City as the preferred alternative.

Accordingly, the hybrid alternative is the proposed project concept being evaluated for environmental impacts and aspects of the concept will be further analyzed in the draft Environmental Impact Report. The Project would span the length of Beach Boulevard (approximately 0.5 miles), primarily consisting of a deep foundation seawall, rock scour apron, and beach nourishment; along with a variety of public amenities along the seaward side of Beach Boulevard. In late 2023 and early 2024, the City held three public meetings to collect feedback on the preliminary designs, and continues to conduct additional engineering feasibility and cost analyses.

¹ GHD, Inc., Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project, Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment, City of Pacifica, May 2021. Available at: <https://www.cityofpacific.org/home/showpublisheddocument/2256/637833568742770000>.

² GHD, Inc., Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project, Alternatives Analysis Report, City of Pacifica, May 2021. Available at: <https://www.cityofpacific.org/home/showpublisheddocument/2262/637833568761030000>.

Project Description

The primary purposes of the Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project are to:

- Create a multi-benefit solution to protect public infrastructure, recreational activities, and the community at large, from further coastal erosion impacts;
- Ensure public health and safety in the general vicinity of Beach Boulevard including the West Sharp Park neighborhood;
- Build climate resilience into one of the most vulnerable segments of the City's shoreline; and
- Improve public access to and use of the Beach Boulevard Promenade, Pacifica Municipal Fishing Pier and the restored beach.

Project Location and Site Description

The Project area is located along the City of Pacifica's Pacific Ocean coastline, in the northern part of San Mateo County, approximately four miles south of the City and County of San Francisco. The Project would occur along a 0.5-mile stretch of coast on the western edge of the West Sharp Park neighborhood within the City of Pacifica. The Project area runs parallel to Beach Boulevard, just west of Highway 1 and the Palmetto Shopping District, and generally extends from north of Paloma Avenue to south of Clarendon Road. Development in the Project vicinity consists primarily of residential, recreational, commercial, and retail uses. The Project area is entirely within the coastal zone and is shown in **Figure 1**, Project Location.

As noted above, an existing seawall extends the length of Beach Boulevard. The Beach Boulevard seawall was constructed in three sections at two different times. The portion extending between the north end of Beach Boulevard in the north to just south of the Pier in the south (North Wall and Pier Wall) was completed in 1984. The portion extending from the Pier to Clarendon Road (South Wall) was completed in 1987.

The North Wall consists of an armor stone revetment backed by a concrete tile (reinforced earth) wall and rises to elevations 26 feet North American Vertical Datum (NAVD)³ near the Pier to 32 feet NAVD near Carmel Avenue in the north. The North Wall has experienced multiple failures over the past 40 years, most recently in 2024, 2020, 2016, and 2002 following high water levels and large wave events.

The Pier Wall consists of sheet piles backed by a reinforced concrete and soil cement gravity wall along the base of the Pier's abutment structure. The sheet pile and gravity wall extend approximately 115 feet seaward from Beach Boulevard centerline and provide the foundation for the Pier deck and building at the base of the Pier. The Pier abutment steel sheet piles have suffered from extensive corrosion and sand abrasion, including 100 percent loss along one segment of the sheet pile wall.

³ North American Vertical Datum (NAVD) refers to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988, a fixed reference for elevations, and is generally close to the mean lower low water tidal datum.

The South Wall consists of a 6-ton armor-stone revetment in front of a concrete panel seawall and rises to elevations 26 feet NAVD near the pier to 23 feet NAVD at the south end near Clarendon Avenue. Although the north end of the South Wall gets overtopped by seawater regularly, it has not experienced damage and failures to the same extent as the North Wall.

Beyond the Project area to the south, south of Clarendon Road, an earthen embankment (berm) with rock slope protection owned by the City and County of San Francisco exists along the Sharp Park Golf Course and Laguna Salada to protect against coastal flooding and wave runup during extreme storm events. The berm, which rises to an elevation of approximately 27 feet NAVD, was designed and constructed in response to the severe winter storms of 1982 and 1983 which overtopped the previous berm and resulted in substantial damage to the golf course grounds and surrounding neighborhoods.

Currently there is a gap between the South Wall and the Sharp Park Golf Course berm. This area, referred to generally as the “Clarendon Gap,” is about 70 feet long and provides an access point to the beach area and Coastal Trail, which runs along the top of the berm towards Mori Point. The gap presents a low spot and vulnerability in the existing coastal protection system.

A number of existing utilities are located behind, and protected by, the Beach Boulevard seawall. One of the primary objectives of the original seawall was to protect utilities, namely the large sewer main that runs parallel to the wall beneath the road pavement. The City’s 2021 Existing Conditions Report⁴ describes the types and locations of utility infrastructure along Beach Boulevard, including: 12-inch to 72-inch stormwater conveyance; 6-inch to 26-inch sewer conveyance; 6-inch drinking water conveyance; 12kV electrical lines; a high-pressure gas distribution main of unknown size; and various telecommunication facilities.

During the 2023/2024 winter season, storms caused closure of the Pier and neighborhood flooding. Large waves and high water levels caused significant amounts of water and sand to overtop the seawall, resulting in flooding, a large accumulation of sand on Beach Boulevard, and damage to storm drains. In addition to disrupting recreational use and residential and businesses access, the coastal flooding from the December storms caused several hundred thousand dollars in public property damage.

⁴ GHD, Inc., Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project, Existing Conditions Report, City of Pacifica, January 2021. <https://www.cityofpacific.org/home/showpublisheddocument/2254/637833568736670000>.



SOURCE: ESA, 2024; Google Earth, 2024

Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project

Figure 1
Project Location

Proposed Project Components

Under the Project, the City would replace the entire existing seawall and revetments with a new seawall along the entire Project length. The new seawall would be fronted on the ocean side by a rock berm to stabilize and prevent beach scour at the base of the wall (“rock scour apron”). The Project would also include an initial placement of sand over the rock scour apron (“beach nourishment”). The City would construct several public access and recreational amenities, which may include a variety of seating options, enhanced pedestrian and bicyclist wayfinding, public art, water fountains, a play structure, and expanded viewing opportunities. **Figure 2** shows the existing and proposed seawall alignment, and identifies locations where cross-sections of the shore, wall, and promenade are shown in **Figures 2a** through **2c**. Each of these Project elements is described in more detail below.

Seawall

The proposed seawall (**Figure 2**) would consist primarily of steel pipe piles, approximately 30 inches in diameter and filled with reinforced concrete. A cast-in-place reinforced concrete cap would be poured above the pile wall to achieve the design crest elevation of approximately 30 feet NAVD. The new North Wall would extend approximately 1,400 feet, from north of Paloma Avenue to the Pier Wall (see **Figures 2** and **2a**). The new Pier Wall would extend around the base of the Pier, a distance of about 220 feet, encasing the existing structure behind a new seawall consisting of steel pipe piles filled with reinforced concrete, similar to the North Wall (see **Figures 2** and **2b**). South of the Pier Wall, the City would construct a new South Wall which would continue for a distance of about 700 feet where the alignment follows the existing wall. This segment would also consist of steel pipe piles filled with reinforced concrete; however, the southern 500-feet of the new South Wall would follow the alignment of Beach Boulevard, approximately 100 feet landward of the existing South Wall alignment. This portion of the new South Wall would consist of a shallow foundation concrete retaining wall and include a cobble berm for erosion protection and dissipation of wave energy (see **Figures 2** and **2c**). At its southern end, the new seawall would tie into the existing Sharp Park Golf Course berm, thereby closing the Clarendon Gap and providing a connection point for access to the Sharp Park Golf Course berm.

Rock Scour Apron

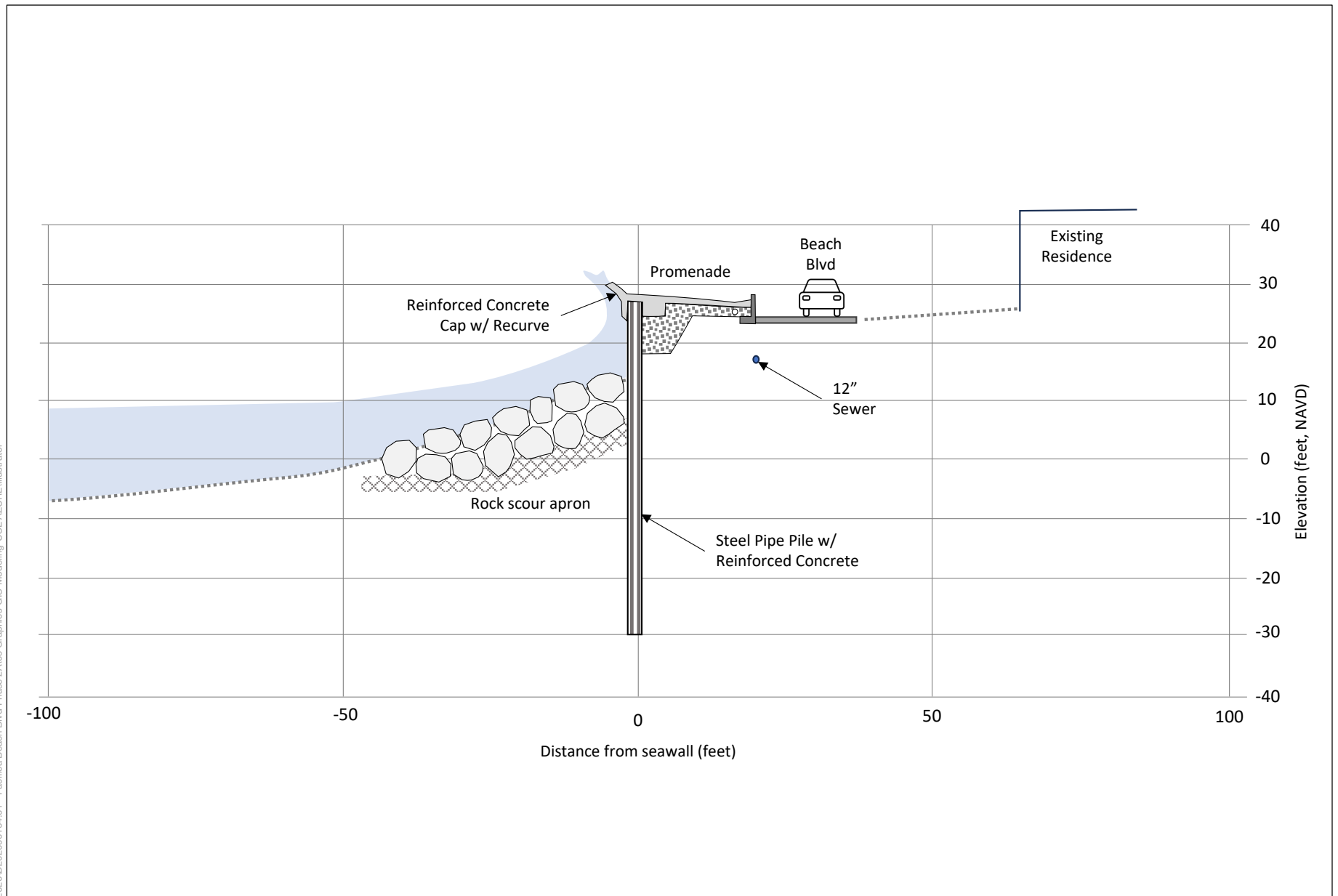
The rock scour apron is proposed to help mitigate the potential for scour in front of the seawall due to long-term erosion in combination with extreme storm events. Scouring occurs when the forces of tides, waves, or currents erode the sediments that surround coastal structures, such as a seawall. The rock scour apron would consist of multiple layers of large armor stone, placed over an underlayer and geotextile fabric. The approximate extent of the rock scour apron is shown in Figure 2. The overall width of the rock scour apron is estimated to be about 50 feet. To limit the amount of imported material, the Project would source rock from the existing revetment for use in the rock scour apron.



SOURCE: ESA, 2024; Google Earth, 2024

Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project

2020D202000164.01 - Pacifica Beach Blvd Phase 2A/05 Graphics-GIS-Modeling-USE AZUREIllustrator



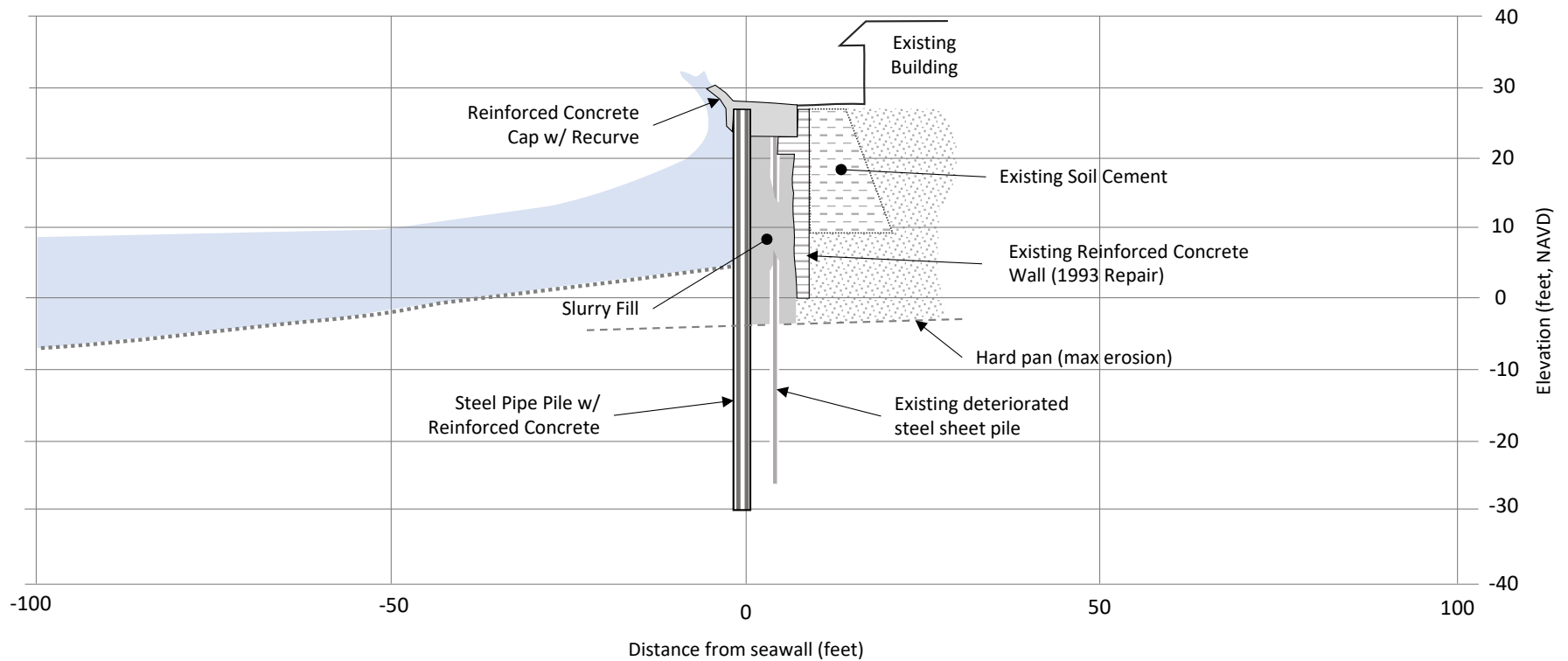
SOURCE: GHD 2024

Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project



Figure 2a
Typical North Wall Cross-Section

2020D202000164.01 - Pacifica Beach Blvd Phase 2A/05 Graphics-GIS-Modeling-USE AZUREIllustrator



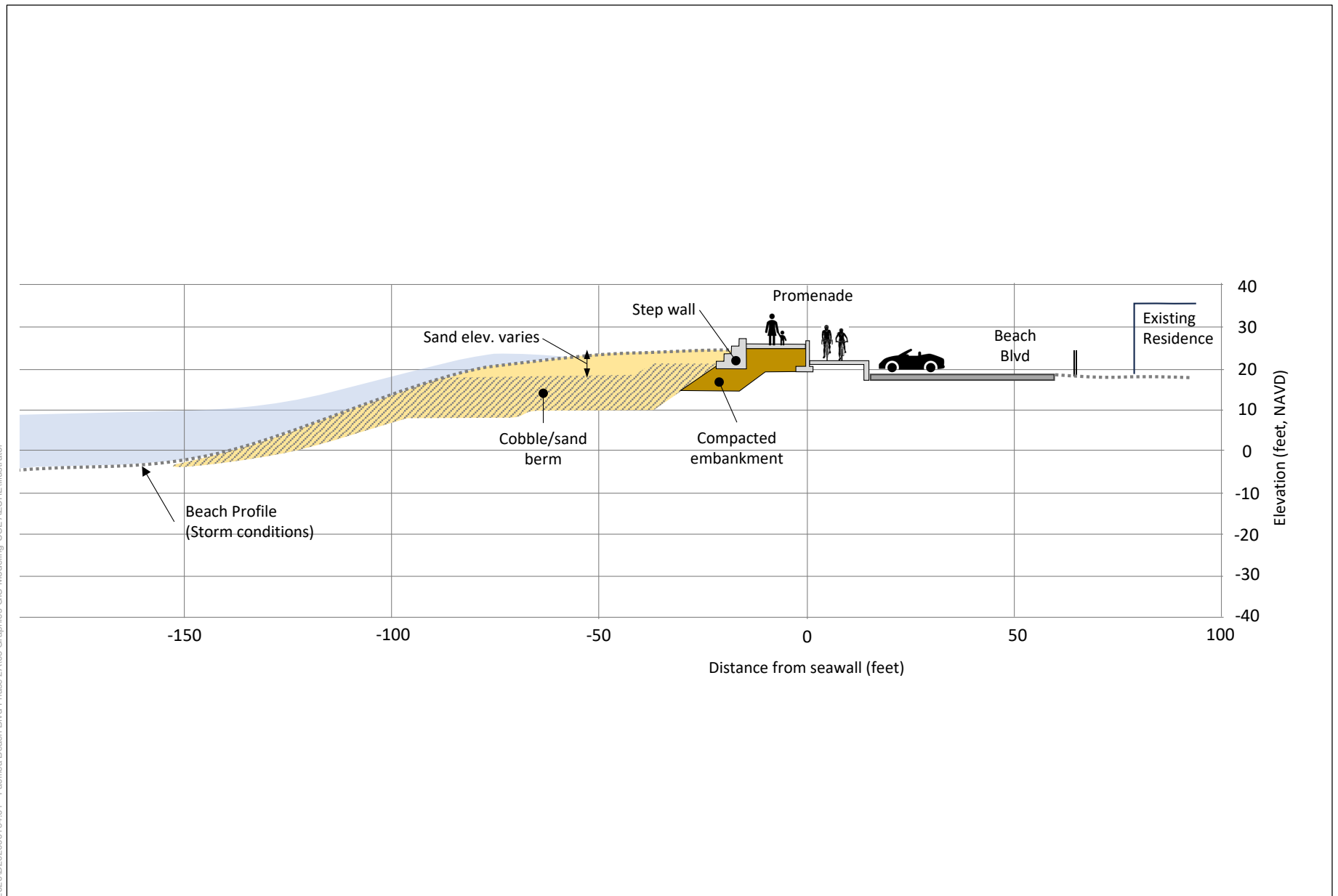
SOURCE: GHD 2024

Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project



Figure 2b
Typical Pier Wall Cross-Section

2020D202000164.01 - Pacifica Beach Blvd Phase 2A/05 Graphics-GIS-Modeling-USE AZUREIllustrator



SOURCE: GHD 2024

Beach Boulevard Infrastructure Resiliency Project



Figure 2c
Typical South Wall Cross-Section

Beach Nourishment

The beach nourishment element of the Project would comprise an initial placement event, intended to assess potential coastal access, recreation, and ecosystem benefits, primarily along the southern portion of the Project area, and to evaluate the feasibility of a longer-term nourishment program. The approximate initial placement and anticipated dissipation areas are shown in Figure 2. The beach nourishment would consist of natural materials (sand and cobble) placed over the rock scour apron to help dissipate wave energy by mimicking the natural beach profile adjustments that occur seasonally and during extreme storm events. However, the seawall would be designed to withstand wave forces with or without beach nourishment.

The types and amounts of material placed along the seawall would be source dependent; the City is considering two primary sources. The first primary source would be beneficial use of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) dredge sand which might otherwise be disposed offshore. As this work would be performed by the Corps as part of its ongoing San Francisco Bay Area federal navigation channels maintenance program, this option would require additional federal, state, and local agency reviews and approvals, including supplemental environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A second primary source of material would be the purchase of sand from a commercial vendor. Under these options, a vessel anchored offshore would pump sand in a slurry⁵ form onto the rock scour apron and beach.

The preliminary design assumes an initial nourishment event of 500,000 cubic yards. If placed uniformly along the seawall, this volume of sand would create about 100 feet of dry beach width initially. The City would monitor the performance of the initial placement to determine whether long-term nourishment is a feasible and effective way to promote coastal access, recreation, and ecosystem benefits along the Project area. The types, locations, and amounts of subsequent nourishment events would be dependent upon lessons learned from these monitoring efforts and may be subject to additional environmental review.

Drainage Improvements

The seawall design includes drainage improvements, such as increased size and number of catch basins along Beach Boulevard to more effectively capture and route seawater that overtops the seawall back to the ocean through the seawall. The approximate locations of the drainage improvements are shown in Figure 2. These strategies are intended to improve drainage and reduce the extent of flooding behind the North Wall and in the vicinity of the Pier. South of the Pier, the existing elevations drop to a point where capturing overtopping and routing back to the ocean through the seawall is no longer feasible. Overtopping and runoff along this stretch would be collected in the existing storm drain system and conveyed to the ocean through the Clarendon outfall. The City is planning a separate project for drainage improvements in the Clarendon Road vicinity to reduce the extent of flooding in this area.

Public Access and Recreation Amenities

The Project would improve public access and recreational opportunities along Beach Boulevard through construction of a variety of public amenities. These features could include new plazas, public art installations, a variety of seating options, landscape plantings, improved wayfinding signage and enhancements for pedestrians and bicyclists (e.g., new paving, designated bicycle lanes, and bicycle parking), new water fountains and trash/recycling facilities, a new play

⁵ A mix of sand and ocean water that can be transported via pipeline from an offshore dredge to the beach.

structure, and additional beach accessways. Some features would extend the length of the promenade (e.g., new seating and landscaping), while others would be sited within or near selected plaza areas (e.g., beach access stairway, play structure). The selection and design of potential public access and recreation amenities are currently in progress and have not yet been finalized; details of these Project features will be described and depicted in the draft EIR.

Construction Activities, Access, and Schedule

Construction Activities

Construction activities would proceed in phases, and the EIR will present a schedule estimating the duration of the beginning and completion of each phase. The City would first modify portions of the road network and Beach Boulevard (e.g., establish temporary closures and detours for construction) to provide safe access for residents and employees, as well as construction worker and equipment access to work areas. Existing features along the promenade would then be removed (e.g., bollards, seating, lighting, pavement, railings). Construction would then proceed with seawall demolition and construction. As portions of the seawall are completed, the City would repurpose some of the existing revetment rock to establish the rock scour apron, and remove and off-haul the remaining excess rock. As available, the City would reuse clean, debris-free sand excavated from the seawall installation, in combination with imported sand, for beach nourishment over the rock scour apron. Following shore stabilization and associated earthwork, the Project focus would shift to public access and recreational amenities, such as the new pedestrian and bicyclist facilities, beach access stairway, and landscaping. Upon completion of construction activities, the City would remove all construction debris and waste, and restore remaining disturbed areas to their approximate pre-construction conditions.

Construction Methods, Staging and Access

Construction vehicles would use the closed portion of Beach Boulevard to access the Project site. The Project would use local and regional roadways to haul construction materials. Highway 1, Francisco Boulevard, Paloma Avenue, and Clarendon Road would be the primary vehicle access routes for construction haul trucks and deliveries. In anticipation of temporary road lane closures, the Project would follow general roadway closure protocols, including notifying the public and providing detour signage, and other measures to minimize traffic disruption.

The Project would use various construction equipment and vehicles, such as cranes, drill rigs, small bulldozers, excavators, backhoes, dozers, heavy duty pile drilling or driving equipment (vibratory or impact hammer), slurry mix plants, asphalt paving machines, compactors, generators, water trucks, concrete trucks, pickup trucks, dump trucks, 4x4 utility vehicles, and other assorted small equipment, such as compressors, jackhammers, pumps, trailers, compactors, and chippers.

Most of the construction activity would occur from the top of bluff along Beach Boulevard. The steel pipe piles would be installed by drilling or driving (vibratory or impact hammer). Relocating or removing the rock revetment and constructing the rock scour apron would occur from both Beach Boulevard and the beach. Beach nourishment would likely involve a hopper dredge, anchored approximately 0.5 miles offshore, pumping sand via underwater pipeline in a slurry form onto the beach, where the sand would be decanted and moved and shaped by dozers. Equipment access to the beach would likely be from existing access points at the northern terminus of Beach

Boulevard and the south end of Beach Boulevard, via the Clarendon Gap. All work on the beach would be conducted during low tide and equipment would avoid work in wet areas as much as possible. The City would use the former wastewater treatment plant site behind city council chambers and bounded by Beach Boulevard to the west, Palmetto Avenue to the east, and Montecito Avenue to the north, for project construction staging.

Construction Schedule

The City would construct the Project over approximately two years with an estimated construction period spanning 2027 through 2029. Project construction would proceed up to seven days per week, except holidays. Consistent with the City's Noise Ordinance (PMC Section 8-1.05), construction activities would be restricted to between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Operations and Maintenance

City agencies with oversight responsibility (e.g., Public Works Department) would operate and maintain Project facilities, as is done under existing conditions and generally in a similar fashion. Operations and maintenance would be required for the new public access and recreation features. Periodic removal of sand from the road, promenade and new drainage system would be necessary.

Probable Environmental Effects and Scope of the EIR

The City anticipates that the EIR will address the following environmental topics in detail, in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. The analysis will focus on the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect physical environmental effects that could result from implementation of the proposed Project.

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources

The EIR will also include an abbreviated discussion of other environmental topics for which the proposed Project would be expected to have negligible or no impact. These include Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Energy, Land Use and Planning, Population and Housing, Public Services, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Mineral Resources, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire. The project would be expected to have negligible or no effect related to these topics, either because the corresponding environmental resource is not present in the Project area (e.g., agricultural or forestry resources) or because the project activities would have no potential for substantial adverse effects related to these topics (e.g., mineral resources or wildfire).

The EIR will also include chapters that discuss other topics required under CEQA (e.g., potential significant irreversible environmental changes resulting from the Project); alternatives to the proposed Project, including a discussion of alternatives considered but rejected; as well as effects

not found to be significant. In addition to the EIR, Project-specific technical studies are being prepared by various technical consultants.

Anticipated Permits and Approvals

Based upon existing Project concepts, the following is a preliminary list of potential approvals expected to be needed for Project construction and operation.

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - NEPA compliance for revetment removal, seawall, rock scour apron and sand placement
 - Clean Water Act section 404 authorization for revetment removal, seawall, rock scour apron and sand placement
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
 - NEPA compliance for funding under the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities grant program
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service consultations:
 - Federal Endangered Species Act, Section 7 for potential project impacts on federally listed species that have potential to occur in the Project area, and to critical habitat which occurs within the Project area
 - Marine Mammal Protection Act for potential effects on marine mammals
 - Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act for potential impacts on managed fish species and essential fish habitat
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
 - Clean Water Act Section 401, Water Quality Certification and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act Report of Waste Discharge for potential discharges to water of the United States and waters of the state
- California Coastal Commission
 - Coastal Development Permit for development within the coastal zone
- California State Lands Commission
 - Lease may be needed for revetment removal, seawall, beach access stairway, rock scour apron, and beach nourishment

Public Scoping Process

To ensure that the EIR for the proposed Project is thorough and adequate and to ensure that the issues of concern to the public and public agencies are addressed, the City is requesting comments and guidance on the scope and content of the EIR from interested public agencies, organizations, and individuals. Public comments on the scope of issues to be evaluated in the EIR are encouraged and should be focused on environmental issues rather than the merits of the proposed Project.

Public Meeting and Oral Comments

Pursuant to Public Resources Section 21083.9 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15206, the City will hold a public scoping meeting to receive oral comments concerning the scope of the EIR. The

meeting will be held on **August 22, 2024 at 6 p.m.** and will occur virtually through video and teleconference. The meeting will consist of a presentation describing the Project background, proposed features, and the environmental review process, followed by an opportunity for the public to provide oral comments. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in the meeting by registering for the internet video conference via Zoom ([link](#)),⁶ or calling in by telephone ((669) 444-9171, meeting ID: 897 5144 4987).

Written Comments

Written comments are invited from all interested parties on the scope and content of the EIR. Written comments should be directed to the name and address below:

Email (preferred): SCervantes@pacifica.gov

Regular Mail: City of Pacifica
Attn: Stefanie Cervantes, AICP, Planning Department
170 Maria Avenue
Pacifica, CA 94044

Written comments are due to the City of Pacifica at the location addressed above by 5:00 p.m. on August 30, 2024.

Responsible and Trustee Agencies

State Agencies: If you represent an agency that is a Responsible or a Trustee Agency, we need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed Project. Your agency may need to use the EIR when considering a permit or other approval for this project. Please include the name of a contact person in your agency.

For additional project information, visit <https://www.cityofpacifica.org/departments/public-works/engineering/capital-improvement-projects/beach-boulevard-infrastructure-resiliency-project>

Please contact Stefanie Cervantes at (650) 738-7341 or SCervantes@pacifica.gov with any questions regarding this notice or the scoping meeting.

S. Cervantes

Stefanie Cervantes, AICP
Acting Deputy Director

7/29/2024

Date

⁶ Zoom Meeting Link: <https://kearnswest.zoom.us/j/89751444987>