



AGENDA REPORT

CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

910 Calle Negocio
2nd Floor
San Clemente, California
www.san-clemente.org

Meeting Date: September 5, 2023

Agenda Item: 7G

Department: City Manager

Prepared By Leslea Meyerhoff, Consulting Coastal Administrator

Subject:

PARTICIPATION IN SANDAG REGIONAL BEACH SAND PROJECT III

Fiscal Impact:

Yes. Approval of this request is anticipated to result in cost sharing in the SANDAG Regional Beach Sand Project (RBSP) III Phase 1 activities and supports implementation of a high priority coastal resiliency goals of developing a citywide comprehensive beach restoration program. Once the cost sharing amount is determined, staff will return to City Council with a request for authorization to enter into a memorandum of understanding with SANDAG and a funding appropriation.

Summary:

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the submittal of a letter to SANDAG requesting that the City of San Clemente, as a member City in the Oceanside Littoral Cell, be provided the opportunity to participate in the Phase I planning tasks of the RBSP III. The project will be initiated in late 2023 to support continued San Clemente Coastal Resiliency Plan implementation goal of a citywide comprehensive beach restoration program.

Background:

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the San Diego region and plays a key role in the coordination of a variety of regional projects. The San Diego region has 19 jurisdictions, 10 of which are in the coastal zone and collectively manage approximately 70 miles of coastline. Of the 10 coastal cities, six (Oceanside, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Del Mar and a portion of San Diego) are located in the Oceanside Littoral Cell.

A "littoral cell" is a distinct area of the coastline where sand enters the ocean, flows down the coast, and then is removed from the system, usually via a submarine canyon. Therefore, the littoral cell and its sand or sediment budget are essential planning tools for regional coastal resiliency planning and shoreline management.

San Clemente is located within the Oceanside Littoral Cell along with 6 other neighboring cities to the south and the City of Dana Point and the County of Orange to the north. As such, from a regional coastal planning standpoint, there are significant advantages to be gained by regional collaboration and coordination to develop beach restoration projects benefitting all cities within the Oceanside Littoral Cell.

SANDAG has an established Shoreline Preservation Working Group (SPWG) whose mission is to implement beach replenishment projects, conduct regional shoreline monitoring and advise on issues related to the adopted SANDAG Shoreline Preservation Strategy and companion SANDAG Sand Retention Strategy. SPWG members include elected officials from the coastal cities, tribal representatives, representatives from community groups, property owners, non-governmental organizations, state and federal agencies including military representatives, and UCSD / Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

In 2001, SANDAG implemented its first Regional Beach Sand Project (RBSP I) which delivered nearly 2 million cubic yards of sand to beaches in San Diego County. In 2012, SANDAG implemented a second RBSP (RBSP II) which placed nearly 1.5 million cubic yards of sand in the region. Collectively, those two projects added approximately 3.5 million cubic yards of sand to the beaches in San Diego County. The SANDAG Shoreline Preservation Strategy identified a regional need for approximately 30 million cubic yards of sand to address existing and future public beach restoration needs indicating a need to scale up both in terms of frequency and size to meet regional coastal resiliency goals.

In late 2022, SANDAG initiated efforts to begin the planning process for a third RBSP (e.g., RBSP III) and asked all coastal jurisdictions to explore their interest in participating in RBSP III and advise SANDAG accordingly. Interested jurisdictions have been asked to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SANDAG to support the initial planning phase of RBSP III.

The purpose of this Staff Report is to request City Council approval to send SANDAG a letter expressing the City's interest in regional coastal resiliency collaboration within the Oceanside Littoral Cell and specifically request to participate in the planning tasks (Phase I) of the RBSP III.

Discussion:

The overall objectives of RBSP III are to (1) identify beach erosion areas that may impact critical public infrastructure; (2) evaluate the economic costs and benefits of implementing another RBSP and explore alternatives including sand retention components to optimize the performance of beach nourishment projects by retaining added sand in place longer; (3) complete a feasibility study for a future regional beach nourishment project and alternatives; and (4) create a plan for surveying offshore sand borrow sites to ensure adequate quantities of sand are available to continue to nourish the region's beaches.

SANDAG proposes to conduct a Phase 1 feasibility study for RBSP III that would use information from SANDAG's Round 1 SB 1 Caltrans Adaptation Planning Grant effort to identify transportation and other critical public infrastructure and facilities that will be impacted by sea-level rise and may benefit from beach nourishment. Implementation of a regional beach sand project would involve dredging beach quality sand from offshore borrow sites and placing it on highly eroded beaches.

Beach nourishment is a key sea-level rise adaptation strategy being utilized by San Clemente and several other cities in the region who have updated their Local Coastal Programs to align with the California Coastal Commission's Guidance on sea-level rise that promotes beach sand replenishment as a preferred "soft" or green coastal resiliency solution. Wide beaches can help

protect coastal communities and coastal transportation facilities by acting as a buffer to alleviate some of the impacts from sea-level rise, strong storm events, and high tides.

SANDAG will coordinate closely with city staff, city council members who serve on SANDAG's Shoreline Preservation Working Group (SPWG), and other technical advisors on this project. Work efforts from this project will be summarized in two final deliverables which include the feasibility study and an updated offshore borrow site survey plan.

As part of the feasibility study, SANDAG will prepare an updated economic analysis using the 2007 RBSP II feasibility study as a template. The economic analysis will include preliminary cost estimates of a range of project alternatives that may include sand retention, a benefit-to-cost analysis of the project alternatives, and a discussion of economic effects. This economic analysis will be summarized in the feasibility study and included as an appendix to the final document.

The feasibility study will also include an explanation of how beach nourishment can be used to protect coastal critical infrastructure in the region from sea level rise and will identify the various permits and approvals that would be needed for the implementation of the project. Recommendations for streamlining permitting will also be included, with emphasis on replicating work done previously, and applying lessons learned from RBSP I and II, and from other projects in southern California. A meeting will be scheduled with interested stakeholders (city staff, members of the SPWG, members of the public) to review the draft feasibility study and solicit feedback. SANDAG will use a scheduled SPWG meeting as the forum for this discussion. Comments from stakeholders may also be submitted in writing and revisions to the feasibility study will be made as needed. Comments from SANDAG staff and interested stakeholders into a final version of the feasibility study.

SANDAG requires a written commitment from each city prior to work beginning on the preliminary planning activities. In July 2023, SANDAG reached out to San Clemente, Dana Point, and the County of Orange as public agencies responsible for beach management within the Oceanside Littoral Cell. As follow up to this regional coordination effort, it is recommended that the City formally request to participate in Phase I of RBSP III as an Oceanside Littoral Cell public agency. Participation in RBSP III Phase I activities does not commit the city to working on any portion of RBSP III beyond Phase I.

SANDAG is allocating cost sharing for RBSP III Phase I tasks according to the length of shoreline in each jurisdiction relative to the total regional shoreline. The City of San Clemente has 4.5 miles of shoreline, which includes the State Beach. The RBSP III Phase I cost is currently estimated at \$200,000, though this may change if the project study area is expanded to include Oceanside Littoral Cell cities/jurisdictions in south Orange County. Including additional cities/jurisdictions such as San Clemente could also reduce the costs for each participating cities due to economies of scale. Once SANDAG determines each jurisdiction's proportional share, staff will return to City Council with a draft memorandum of understanding and information on the funding amount and request City Council confirmation of participation and payment of the estimated cost share.

In 2022, the City Council reaffirmed that the development of additional coastal resiliency projects that can deliver sand to the City's beaches remains a top near-term and long-term City priority. The City has expressed a desire to develop a citywide, comprehensive beach restoration

program that can supplement the planned USACE project that will nourish a portion of the City's beaches. A key coastal resource in the City remains the sandy beach, which is valuable in terms of public enjoyment for residents and visitors, community well-being, quality of life, and ecosystem services such as storm damage protection and intertidal habitat for plant and animal species. Participation in a SANDAG RBSP III supports all these City goals.

Council Options:

- Authorize the Mayor to sign and submit a letter to SANDAG requesting that the City of San Clemente, as a member City in the Oceanside Littoral Cell, have the opportunity to participate in the Phase I planning tasks of the RBSP III, which supports continued San Clemente Coastal Resiliency Plan implementation goals of establishing a citywide comprehensive beach restoration program.
- Modify the letter and authorize the Mayor to sign the letter and submit it to SANDAG.
- Take no action.
- Continue the item and provide direction to staff.

Environmental Review/Analysis:

The proposed action is not a "project" pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Sections 15378. (14 CCR § 15378.)

Recommended Actions:

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign and submit a letter to SANDAG requesting that the City of San Clemente, as a member City in the Oceanside Littoral Cell, have the opportunity to participate in the Phase I planning tasks of the RBSP III, which supports continued San Clemente Coastal Resiliency Plan implementation goals of establishing a citywide comprehensive beach restoration program.

Attachment:

1. Draft Letter of Interest to SANDAG

Notification:

None.



San Clemente

CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF INCORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

Chris Duncan
Mayor

Steve Knoblock
Mayor Pro Tem

Victor Cabral

Mark Enmeier

CITY MANAGER

Andy Hall

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*"The Spanish Village
by the Sea"*

September 6, 2023

Councilmember Dwight Worden, Chair
SANDAG Shoreline Preservation Working Group
401 "B" Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA. 92101

Re: Letter of Interest to Participate in the SANDAG RBSP III, Phase I

Dear Chair Worden and Members of the Shoreline Preservation Working Group:

On behalf of the City of San Clemente City Council, we hereby submit this letter to you, staff and all other members of the SANDAG Shoreline Preservation Working Group to communicate our interest in participating with other cities in the upcoming SANDAG Regional Beach Sand Project (RBSP) III Project, Phase I scope of work.

The City of San Clemente is located within the Oceanside Littoral Cell along with our downcoast neighboring cities of Oceanside, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Del Mar and a portion of the City of San Diego. The Oceanside Littoral Cell extends from Dana Point Harbor in the north to the Scripps Canyon offshore of La Jolla in the south.

San Clemente shares the same shoreline erosion and coastal sediment deficit problems experienced by other cities in the Oceanside Littoral Cell and we strongly believe that super-regional coordination and collaboration on coastal resiliency projects will reduce overall costs and enhance benefits to all cities participating in RBSP III.

The City of San Clemente would be willing to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement (MOU/MOA) with SANDAG to further demonstrate our commitment to building coastal resiliency in the Oceanside Littoral Cell, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries.

We request consideration of our request as an agenda item at the next SANDAG Shoreline Preservation Working Group meeting.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to discuss our request. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Duncan
Mayor
City of San Clemente