

Summary of Sea Level Rise interviews with County Departments and others – 8/26/21

Department of Conservation and Development

1) John Cunningham, DCD, Transportation Planning

- Based on updates from the process to rethink the Capital Road Improvement and Preservation Program (CRIPP) not aware of any efforts to evaluate existing roads vulnerability to SLR. The CRIPP (link) is a programming document that details funding for capital road improvement projects within Unincorporated Contra Costa County. It is prepared by the Public Works Department and adopted by the Board of Supervisors every two years.
- They use the Transportation Analysis Guidelines (TAG) to evaluate new housing and commercial applications for impacts on traffic, but nothing in there about SLR (TAG was subsequently amended to include a step to check for SLR issues)
- Not aware of any efforts by Contra Costa Transportation Authority to address SLR relative to resilience/adaptation of existing and new infrastructure.

2) Aruna Bhat, Ruben Hernandez, DCD, Current Planning, CEQA and Permitting

- DCD's permit application process and CEQA require applicants to consider the impacts of flooding, but not specifically SLR.
- However, they gave examples of a number of projects that did address the impacts of SLR in their EIR or permit application. Most consultants are aware of the need to do this.
- Other agencies, such as BCDC, are given a chance to review draft EIRs, or are co-lead agencies, and can request that SLR be addressed. For example, BCDC did so with the EIR for the Lower Walnut Creek flood control project.

3) Will Nelson, DCD, Advanced Planning, General Plan

- The updated County General Plan will include several policies and actions related to SLR. This plan should be adopted in early 2023.
- State law requires the Capital Road Improvement and Preservation Program (CRIPP) to be reviewed annually by the Planning Commission to ensure that projects planned for construction during the upcoming year are consistent with the General Plan. Once the updated General Plan is adopted, CRIPP projects will be reviewed for consistency with goals, policies, and actions related to SLR.

4) Jody London, DCD, Sustainability Coordinator

- The County is in the process of updating its Climate Action Plan. The update will address climate adaptation and resilience, including SLR, but it has not been completed yet. It should be done at the same time as the update to the General Plan.

- She sponsored a study by graduate students at the Goldman School at UC Berkeley that made recommendations about governance issues related to addressing the impacts of SLR.
- She would like to ensure coordination/consistency in the future with work that may be done by the ongoing study "Delta Adapts" by the Delta Stewardship Council. SLR is part of their vulnerability assessment for the Delta.
- She has developed a list of agencies at the local, state, and federal level that have permitting and/or decision authority.
- The Department of Conservation and Development is requesting funds from Measure X, the recently approved sales tax, to support work on sea level rise, among other things.

5) Ryan Hernandez, Principal Planner, Contra Costa County Water Agency, Agency Manager

- The County Water Agency utilizes the Federal and State Platforms, the Delta Water Platform, and specific resolutions, all adopted by the Board of Supervisors (Board), to represent and advocate the County's interests. The Delta Water Platform was last updated and approved by the Board in 2014. Focuses on the Delta but can address polices and plans impacting the entire shoreline. It needs to be updated.
- The Water Agency prepares written comments on projects, studies and plans that may affect the Delta and County. State entities, including but not limited to, the Delta Stewardship Council, Delta Protection Commission, Delta Conservancy and the State Water Resources Board.
- The Delta Water Platform doesn't address SLR, but the update will, along with addressing other climate change issues.
- The Water Agency is also preparing, in cooperation with others, the East Contra Costa Groundwater Sustainability Plan (ECC GSP), for submission to the State. This is a new State requirement pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and has never been done before. Two other areas of the County also have groundwater basins that require groundwater sustainability plans, Richmond (East Bay Plain) and Livermore Valley, with other lead agencies.
- The ECC GSP considers and incorporates SLR into the future water budget modeling scenarios, using the State Department of Water Resources guidance. More information can be found in Chapter 5 of the ECC GSP. Related but slightly different, existing conditions show no signs of sea water intrusion in the groundwater basin because it is full, but the ECC GSP proposes a monitoring network to ensure the basin is managed sustainably.

Public Works Department

6) Paul Detjens, Senior Civil Engineer, Public Works Flood Control District

- Could use Restoration Authority money to address "Pinch Points" in Commodity Flow study
- All permitting projects involving hazardous materials could take advantage of the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration team to streamline permits, they address SLR in their process
- Could use SLR resilience as a criteria to rank projects for funding in the Capital Road Improvement and Preservation Program.
- Make sure all resiliency projects are in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan so that they can be eligible for FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program.

- Make sure SLR is considered in the Facilities Improvement Plan
- He was aware of several non-county efforts that solicited stakeholder opinion about SRL – San Francisco Estuary Project did a North Richmond Visioning exercise, the North Richmond Resilient by Design project solicited community input, and the Department of Water Resources sponsored a local effort that solicited community input by the Watershed project in West County and the Resource Conservation District in East County.

7) Ramesh Kanzaria, Public Works, Capital Projects, Division Manager

- Oversee 80 – 90 projects per year of all size, including hazmat remediation
- Many of their projects are subject to CEQA
- Looking at potential impacts of SLR on their projects is not an official part of their internal process, but gave example of County new admin building where this was talked about and mitigations were put in place that addressed SLR as a co-benefit.
- They haven't done any analysis of the potential impact of SLR on existing County-owned buildings and other structures (ie parking lots)

8) Jerry Fahy, Public Works, Division Manager for Transportation Engineering and Nancy Wein, Senior Civil Engineer, Transportation Engineering.

- County manages about 660 miles of County Roads.
- The Capital Road Improvement and Preservation Program (CRIPP) is a list of funded projects ready to be built. Most are improvements to existing roadways, very few new roads.
- Currently don't have a written policy to look at the impacts of SLR on existing road infrastructure or when scoping new projects.
- Would be difficult to change existing road infrastructure to address the impacts of SLR due to the impacts on surrounding infrastructure.
- Would need to look at this issue in the scoping of projects

Health Services Department

9) Dave Runt, Chief Operating Officer, Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

- Have not addressed SLR in their planning efforts but is interested in doing so.

10) Geniffer Mountain, Facilities Manager, Contra Costa Health Services

- Is not aware of any analysis that has been done of the impacts of SLR on Health Department facilities or operations.

11) Gerald Tamayo, Public Health Emergency Planning

- Has not addressed SLR in his program. They would work with the Office of Emergency Services during a flooding event to aid vulnerable populations.
- Participated in drill a few years ago that focused on evacuation strategies during a flooding event.

Office of the Sheriff

12) Meredith Gerhardt, Office of Emergency Services, Senior Emergency Planning Coordinator (via e-mail)

- The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) was updated in 2018 and is updated every 5 years.
- Funding to update the LHMP was recently approved and OES is expecting to put out the RFP to vendors by the end of the year. This means they will select a vendor and start meeting the first quarter of 2022.
- OES has been providing input to DCD for the update to the General Plan.
- OES is currently working on revisions to the County Emergency Operations Plan, which addresses all hazards that may affect the County, including sea level rise.

Other Agencies

1) Dana Brechwald, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, Adapting to Rising Tides Program Manager

- Developing Joint Platform for Regional SLR adaptation w/ Advisory Board of 30
- Regional framework for local implementation
- 2 public workshops in August, adoption in September, transition to implementation after
- Main Questions – who leads, how to fund, how to use existing structures to avoid silos
- MTC is looking at funding plan, developing funding paper and survey
- Developing a funding roadmap, due to be completed this fall

2) Matt Kelly, Contra Costa Transportation Authority, Senior Transportation Planner

- They really haven't done any independent planning for sea-level rise to-date, but did reference it as a challenge for maintaining the system in their 2017 County-wide Transportation Plan (CTP).
- Their upcoming CTP update will include updating the subregional Action Plans for Routes of Regional Significance, and they have added a new non-modal topic of climate change. So the Plans would have to look at impacts that cause, or will be affected by SLR. That is the opportunity to address SLR by developing supportive mitigations for affected facilities in the Action Plans