

# Morro Bay Waterfront Master Plan

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**City of Morro Bay**

Waterfront Master Plan

Advisory Committee

February 5, 2026



# Agenda

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- Goals for a Successful Meeting
- Waterfront Planning Journey – Destination Concept Plans (June 2026)
- Background Report
- Workshop #2
- Issue Focus: Street-end Pedestrian Connections

*Community  
Development  
Director Update*



# A Successful Meeting

1. We receive input from WMPAC members and the public on sections of the Draft Background Report that the WMPAC has not already commented on. The WMPAC already commented on the market study, transportation background report, waterfront history statement, and status of proposals from 1996 plan.
2. The WMPAC and public know what to expect at the upcoming workshop and have an opportunity share their thoughts.
3. The WMPAC and public provide initial input on street end pedestrian connections.
4. We remember that we are one team with a shared goal to create the best possible plan reflecting the values of the community and honoring our spectacular waterfront.

# Journey - Destination Concept Plans

Public Input	<u>Deliverable</u>	Public Input	Public Input	<u>Deliverable</u>	Public Input	<u>Deliverable</u>	Public Input	Public Input
<b>February 5</b> WMPAC (#9)	<b>Final Background Report</b>	<b>February 25</b> Community Workshop (#2)	<b>March 5</b> WMPAC Meeting (#10)	<b>Final Vision Statement</b>	<b>April 2</b> WMPAC Meeting (#11)	<b>Alternative Concept Plans for Character Areas</b>	<b>May 2026</b> Community Workshop (#3)	<b>June 4</b> WMPAC Meeting (#11)
Review Draft Background Report (includes input from Workshop #1)		Background Report	Draft Vision Statement		Draft Framework for Alternatives		Present Alternative Concept Plans	Decide on Preferred Concept Plans
		Ideas and Proposals for Character Areas	Sea Level Rise Adaptation Strategies		Survey Design			

# *Background Report*



# Background Report Overview

- Provides an overview of existing conditions, background information, and policies that inform the planning process for the WMP update
- References existing planning documents and technical studies, including studies prepared by the City and other entities

# REQUEST

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- The WMPAC receives and files the Draft Background Report.
- The WMPAC discusses key takeaways and implications for potential areas of change.
- Key takeaways and potential areas of change will be presented at the next workshop for discussion with the public.

# Background Report Contents

1. Introduction
2. Existing Uses & Regulations
3. Coastal Regulations
4. Ownership, Leases, & Other Local Regulations
5. Current Waterfront Initiatives
6. Circulation
7. Market Scan
8. Public Engagement
9. Evaluation of 1996 WMP Proposals by Plan Area

Appendix A: Market Scan

Appendix B: Transportation Report

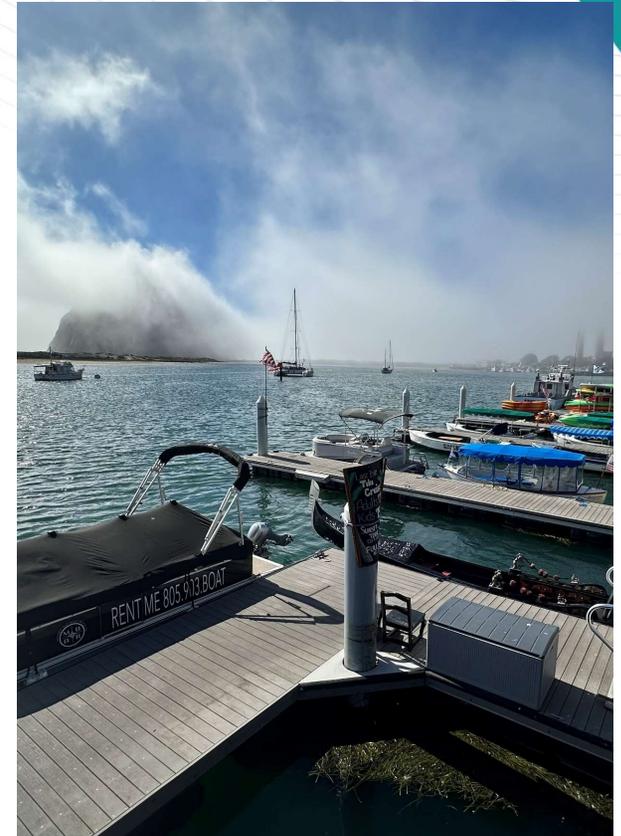
# Existing Uses and Regulations

- 2.1 Existing Land Uses
  - » The waterfront land uses include Open Space/Conservation (largest), Major Public Facilities and Downtown/Village commercial and recreational areas.
- 2.2 Plan Morro Bay
  - » The WMP addresses 3 key General Plan (2021) policies: update the 1996 WMP, create a Power Plant site master plan, and plan for the WWTP site redevelopment.
- 2.3 General Plan Land Use
  - » The WMP Area contains five General Plan Land Use designations: Visitor-Serving Commercial, Public / Institutional, Commercial / Recreational Fishing, Waterfront Commercial / Industrial, and Open Space / Recreation.
- 2.4 Zoning
  - » Zoning districts include Park and Recreation, Visitor-Serving Commercial, Public Facility, Waterfront, and Commercial Fishing.



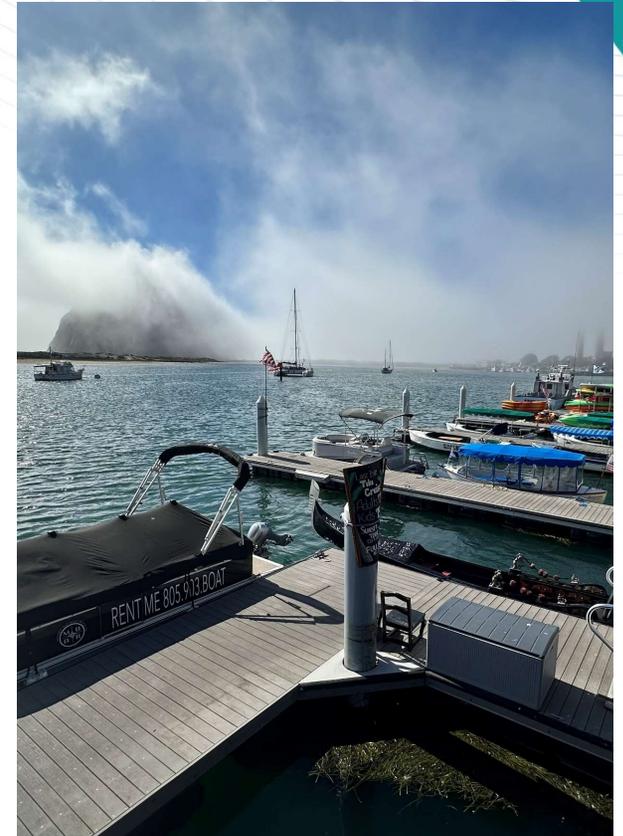
# Coastal Regulations

- California Coastal Act & Local Coastal Program
  - » The WMP area falls within the Coastal Zone, regulated by the Coastal Act to preserve resources and ensure public access. The City's LCP was updated and recertified in 2021.
- Sea Level Rise Guidance
  - » The WMP will include sea level rise analysis and adaptation pathways per the California Coastal Commission's 2024 guidance.
- Tidelands Trust Agreement
  - » The City manages State-Granted Tidelands under a trust agreement. Revenues must be reinvested into trust purposes.



# Coastal Regulations

- Measure D
  - » Measure D prohibits new development in a half-mile stretch within the tidelands between Beach Street and Target Rock, the main stretch of the Embarcadero, unless its primary use is commercial fishing activities and noncommercial recreational fishing.
- Measure A-24
  - » Designates areas of the WMP as Visitor Serving Commercial, Commercial/ Recreation Fishing, and Mixed-Use Residential Overlay



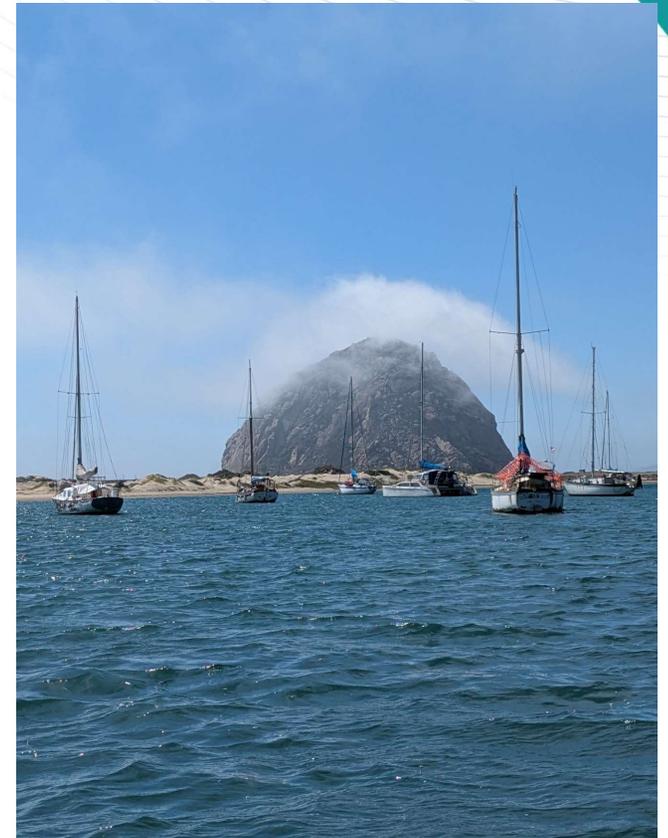
# Ownership, Leases and Other Local Regulations

- Land Ownership
  - » The Harbor Department manages 35 leases on waterfront, with 3 distinct areas: Measure D area, commercial core, and southern area.
- 1996 Waterfront Master Plan
  - » Proposed improvements including parking reorganization, pedestrian amenities, and boat launch facilities.
- Downtown Waterfront Strategic Plan (2018)
  - » Focuses on connecting downtown to the waterfront through improved walkability, wayfinding, and streetscape improvements.
- Power Plant Master Plan (2022)
  - » Community input prioritized small-scale harbor-character development with mixed commercial uses.
- Climate Action Plan (2014)
  - » Targets 15% GHG reduction by 2020, with measures addressing transportation, residential, and commercial sectors.



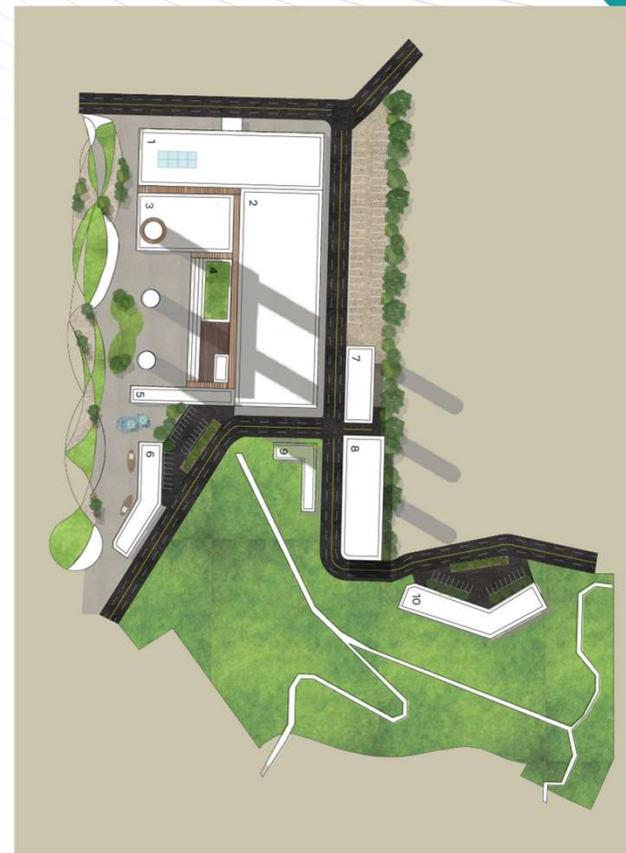
# Current Waterfront Initiatives

- The City is actively managing multiple initiatives that will inform the WMP update, including:
  - » Coleman Park Conceptual Plan Market Plaza Redevelopment
  - » Morro Rock Visitor Access Enhancement
  - » Morro Dunes RV Park Lease
  - » Wastewater Treatment Plant Decommissioning
  - » 180 Atascadero Road Concrete Plant Decommissioning
  - » Bayside Landing Development
  - » Maritime Museum Expansion
  - » Other Tidelands Leases



# Other Plans and Projects

- Cal Poly SLO Student Project (2025)
  - » City and Regional Planning students created site-specific design responses for five waterfront areas: Former Tank Farm, Power Plant, Fishermen's Wharf, Coleman Park, and North Morro Creek/RV Park.
  - » Designs explore ecological resilience, public access, and cultural heritage.
- Central Coast Emerging Industries Study:
  - » Examined waterfront siting and infrastructure needs for emerging coastal industries.
  - » Provided insights into future economic opportunities compatible with working waterfront uses.



**AP1** Photo is from the student project (power plant group)

Autumn Paynton, 2026-01-22T22:34:03.002

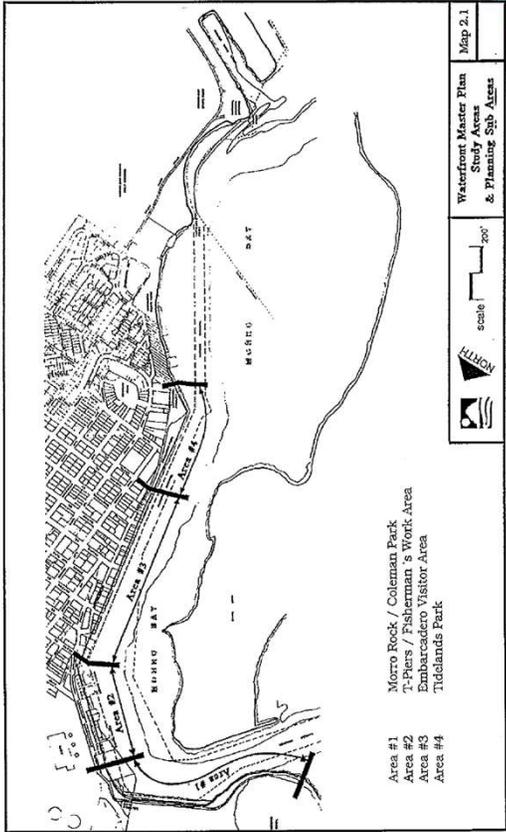
# Public Engagement

- Stakeholder Focus Groups:
  - » Four focus group discussions engaged Environmental Groups, Business Community, Community Groups, and Harbor-related stakeholders to gather on-the-ground knowledge.
  - » Key Themes from Focus Groups:
    - Discussions covered environmental protection, economic development, circulation and parking concerns, community access, harbor operations, and balancing competing waterfront uses.
- Stakeholder Interviews:
  - » Additional one-on-one interviews provided deeper insights from key stakeholders including leaseholders, fishing industry representatives, and business owners.



# Sections Previously Reviewed

- Market Scan
- Circulation Report
- 1996 Waterfront Master Plan Proposals



# Conclusion

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- The Background Report provides an overview of existing conditions, background information, and policies that inform the planning process for the WMP update.
- The Background Report does not explicitly state or limit future actions. Furthermore, it does not include guardrails or limitations for future development.

# REQUEST

- The WMPAC receives and files the Draft Background Report.
- The WMPAC discusses key takeaways and implications for potential areas of change.
- Key takeaways and potential areas of change will be presented at the next workshop for discussion with the public.
- Example considerations:
  - » **Constraints** – Regulations, long term lease expirations
  - » **Opportunities** – Short term lease expirations, Downtown Waterfront Strategic Plan Opportunity Sites, Power Plant and WWTP
  - » Areas of Change - Little, Moderate, Greater

# *Workshop #2*

*February 25, 2026*

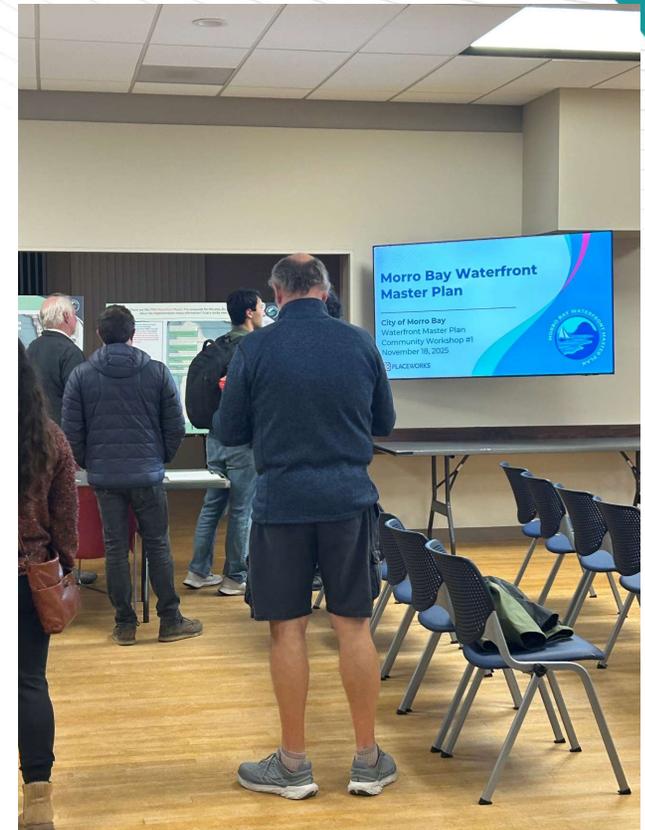


# Purpose and Goals

- Share an overview of the project.
- Share a summary of input received from Workshop 1.
- Present and share the Background Report, including Market Scan and Transportation Report.
- Solicit input on a Draft Vision Statement.
- Initiate a discussion on “street end opportunity sites”.
- Solicit input on initial ideas and proposals for each character area.

# Agenda

- 6:00–6:30 PM Open House Stations
  - » Circulate freely among interactive stations, engage with project materials, and provide input.
- 6:30–7:20 PM Interactive Presentation
  - » Overview of Background Report, including Market Scan and Transportation Report with interactive polling via Mentimeter.
- 7:20–8:00 PM Open House Stations
  - » Continue engaging with stations and project team members at your own pace.



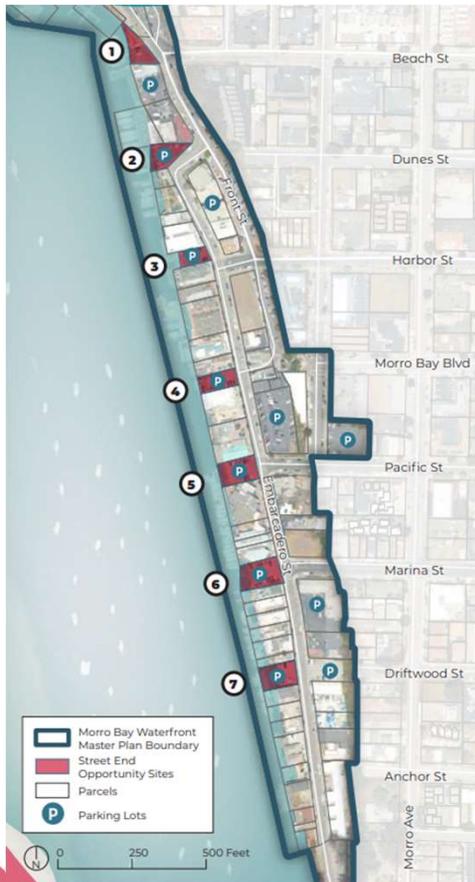
# Overview of Stations

- Station 1: Project Overview - WMP update overview.
- Station 2: Vision Statement - Draft Vision Statement reflecting key themes from input received.
- Station 3: Ideas and Proposals - Preliminary ideas for each character area on graphic maps.
- Station 4: Street End Opportunity Sites - Introduction to street end sites along the Embarcadero with opportunities for input.
- Children's Activity Area - Family-friendly space with coloring sheets and art supplies.

*Issue Focus:  
Street End  
Pedestrian  
Connections*



# Street End Pedestrian Connections



**POLICY CIR-2.2: Street End Pedestrian Connections.** Create safer and more distinct lateral access connections across the street ends on the west side of the Embarcadero at Dunes, Harbor, Morro Bay Boulevard, Front, Pacific, Marina, and Driftwood Streets, including by relocating parking from these areas. (See also Policies LU-4.1, LU-4.5, LU-4.6, LU-7.1 through LU-7.6, and OS-1.6 and Implementation Action LU-19).

# Street End Implementation

- Initial Staff Impressions -

- » The street end pedestrian connections are important to enhance coastal access and pedestrian safety.
- » The WMP's circulation concept must identify all replacement parking spaces.
- » Some street ends make more sense than others to convert into public spaces.

# Street End Pedestrian Connections

- The WMP will determine how we will implement this policy -
  - » Financing – Who pays for the pedestrian connections – City budget, adjacent lease site developers, in-lieu fees?
  - » Design – How do we want each street end to look and function – public plaza, expanded lease site, limited vehicle access, other ideas?
  - » Timing and Priority – What are the highest priority pedestrian street end connections – which ones do we want to create first?

# Street End Implementation

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- At the Feb. 25 Workshop, participants will be asked to:
  - » Fill out a matrix to rate and rank street end pedestrian connections
  - » Share ideas and proposals for street end connections

# Thank You

