



Mayor: Carla Wixom
City Manager: Yvonne Kimball
Harbor Director: Ted Schiafone
Public Works Director: Greg Kwolek
February 2024

Morro Bay Harbor Needs



Dredging. The Yaquina (Army Corps of Engineers) comes every year to the Morro Bay Harbor in April to dredge the inlet. This dredge is critically important to the U.S. Coast Guard, California State Fish and Wildlife, Morro Bay Harbor Patrol, commercial fishing, and recreational boating. In 2023 the Harbor received an \$14.4M appropriation to dredge the inlet through the back channel in 2024. That dredge is pending permits. If permits are not received in time, those funds should be carried into future years to ensure that portion of the back channel is clear to navigation. Morro Bay Harbor needs to see that \$4M is available every April to ensure the inlet remains open to navigation.

- **The City is requesting \$4,000,000 for annual dredging**
- Contact: Julie Minerva, Carpi & Clay, 202.822.8300





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Offshore Wind

The Biden Administration identified the “Morro Bay 399” area in the ocean off Morro Bay to support floating offshore wind energy. Three OSW companies have obtained leases to develop here. Our community has been thrust into the planning and development of this project just 30 miles off our coast. To protect the interests of our community, while supporting the greater federal goals of reaching 30GW of clean energy by 2030, Morro Bay must be funded annually for expert personnel focused on environmental, legal, and technical issues. Without annual federal funding, the City’s ability to direct resources to this critical planning activity will be severely limited. While the City remains a critical partner of OSW, we are concerned about how it will affect our fishing industry, our local economy, and our quality of life. The City needs to ensure proper and adequate mitigations are in place prior to any surveys and development. It is vital that the lease holders or auction winners meaningfully engage with Morro Bay in the community benefit agreement and mitigation process.

- **The City is requesting a minimum of \$500,000 annually to support City efforts to research, conduct analysis, training, outreach, legal and environmental reviews as related to the Offshore Wind Development.**
- Contact: Mike Miller, The Ferguson Group, 707.287.0023



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North T-Pier Project. Morro Bay Harbor's North T-Pier needs major safety improvements, repairs, and renovations to remain viable. The T-Pier serves the U.S. Coast Guard, commercial fishing, City Harbor Patrol, California Fish and Wildlife, and likely will support offshore wind in the future. The City received \$1.5M in CPF/CDS for its North T-Pier Project. In order to release funding the City had an above water assessment performed by a qualified engineering firm. It was determined critical above water structural repairs will be necessary to ensure continued safe operation of the Pier. Due to the significant costs to mobilize/de-mobilize for this repair, other safety repairs to electric supply and fire suppression cannot be completed with the available funding. A follow up below water assessment was performed to inform a complete plan to refurbish and rebuild the North T-Pier. That assessment identified all the structural pilings and piers that must be replaced. While \$1.5M will be available to repair the above water structure, it will not be sufficient to update the electrical and fire safety issues or the remaining below water piers and pilings. The consulting engineer's assessment determined an additional \$7M will be necessary.

- **The City is requesting \$7,000,000 in CPF/CDS funding to complete funding of the full North T-Pier project.**
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National Estuary Program. Morro Bay is home to one of the 28 National Estuary Programs in the US. Morro Bay Estuary encompasses 2,300 acres. The National Estuary Program was created by Congress in the 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act. In addition to supporting local wildlife, estuaries have impacts on global ecosystems and climate. The Morro Bay estuary provides an ideal habitat for many animal species, ranging from sea slugs to sea otters, and endemic species. The calm, shallow waters provide food, nursery, and breeding grounds for many animals throughout the year. Morro Bay is also an important stopover for migratory animals such as birds and monarch butterflies.

With the importance of our bay's ecological and environmental health and the great work the Morro Bay National Estuary Program and the Bay Foundation do to support and enhance those things, support for continued federal funding of our nation's National Estuary Programs is always a priority.



Fisheries. The City remains interested in how the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS) will potentially impact commercial and recreational fisheries and fishers. Also, of great concern to the commercial fishing industry is how the proposed offshore wind (OSW) power generation farms will affect fisheries and fishers. The City's initial comments regarding fisheries and the sanctuary were provided to NOAA in January of 2022 and again in October 2023. The City of Morro Bay identified the following concerns:

- A. The Chumash Heritage Marine Sanctuary indicates there are no new regulations proposed on commercial fishing. It is noted that future new regulations are not excluded. While it appears the Sanctuary does not have any direct jurisdiction on fishing regulations, they can recommend regulations that have direct or indirect influence on commercial fishing.
- B. The Sanctuary adds another layer of governance over the activities that would occur in the designated coastal area. Staff has concluded if the proposed



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Sanctuary includes the Morro Bay dredge disposal site, it is possible that the site will be grandfathered in its use. It appears that any request to increase the size of the dredge disposal site or any new dredge site location would require the additional approval of the Sanctuary. The revised location of the proposed Sanctuary has been modified to exclude the Harbor entrance and location of possible cables that could connect offshore wind turbines to the power grid.

- C. NOAA has developed a 60-page draft management plan. The plan calls for the implementation of a Sanctuary Advisory Council. **The City of Morro Bay requested to be included in the Advisory Council.**

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Storm Damage and High Surf/ King Tide Damage.

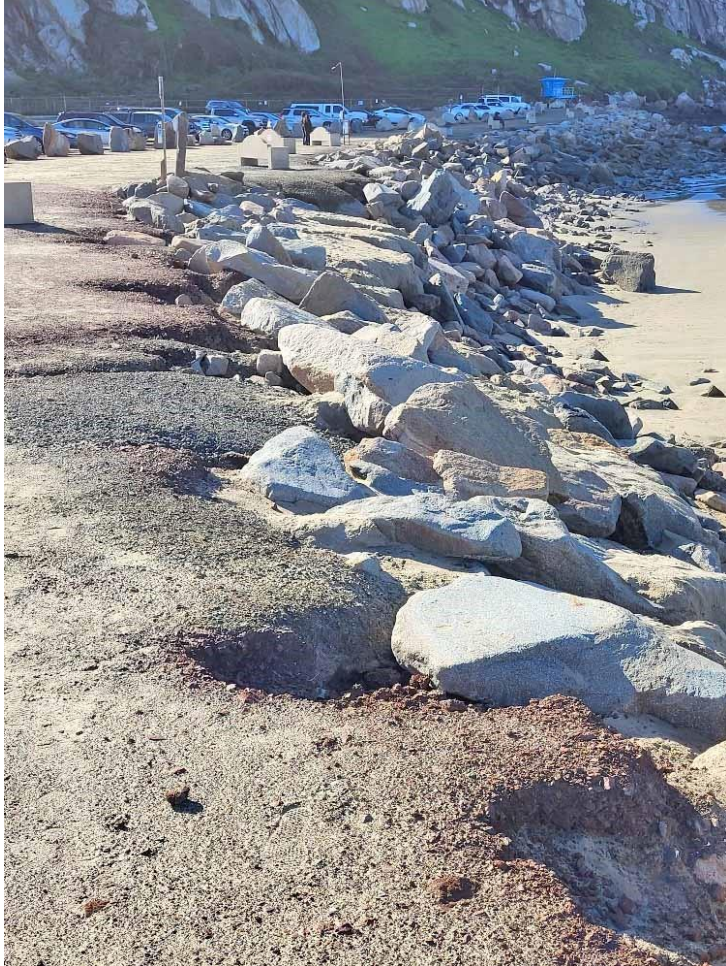
A federal major disaster was declared for San Luis Obispo County in January and March 2023 (which includes the City of Morro Bay) due to successive atmospheric river events that brought significant rainfall, massive swells, and flooding. An additional king tide/ high surf and storm events in December 2023 caused more damage but was not declared a federal disaster. The high surf events combined with past storms worsened the existing extensive damage to our Harbor infrastructure (docks, seawalls, revetments, etc.) and other City infrastructure (storm drains, vehicles, equipment, roads, City facilities, etc.), as well as damage to private homes and businesses. The City has been seeking funding for eligible costs through FEMA, however, it appears no reimbursements are going to be provided. This infrastructure protects roadways, parking, and public access to our beaches, waterways, and the businesses that support our economy.

While the City does not have an exact estimate on the project costs, typical revetments repairs cost \$3,000 per linear foot. Estimating the linear foot of number of damaged revetments, a minimum of \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000 is likely to be needed for repairs to this critical infrastructure of the Harbor.

- **The City is seeking \$1,000,000 to evaluate alternative improvements as it relates to revetments and seawalls, and \$5,000,000 to repair infrastructure including hardening our infrastructure and preparing for sea level rise to ensure continued economic viability of the Harbor, commercial fishing, and support future offshore wind.**
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ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – Harbor Infrastructure Repair & Improvements

- Morro Bay requests clarity on agency responsibility to maintain ocean jetties and harbor revetments and seawalls in Morro Bay
- Morro Bay requests development of an ocean jetty, harbor revetment, and harbor seawall implementation plan performed by the Army Corps of Engineers

The extreme weather events of January 2023 caused significant damage to the Harbor's rock revetments and seawall. While the damage has not been repaired, late 2023's king tide/ high surf events further eroded the revetments and seawalls. These rock revetments and sea walls are necessary components to our Harbors existence and must be hardened for future weather events. Revetment on the northern side of Morro Rock protects the parking lot and beach had displaced downward and scattered causing erosion along the parking lot that supports transient visitor parking. Damage also exists along the south side of the Morro Rock Causeway and adjacent harbor beach causing potential erosion and affecting future access via pedestrian and vehicles. Damage and erosion is also identified along the path to Coleman Park Kayak Beach creating possible future closure. Another damaged area is a section of revetment by Beach Street that was previously stabilized with gunite. This area has now been undermined by wave action and has sluffed down toward the Harbor basin. Finally, a seawall by Tidelands Park was heavily damage and unrepairable. This section of sea wall will need to be replaced.

Project Financing and Request

While the City does not have an exact estimate on the project costs, typical revetments repairs cost \$3,000 per linear foot. Estimating the linear foot of number of damaged revetments, we are looking at a minimum of \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000 for repairs to this critical Harbor infrastructure.

Project Summary –

- The Army Corps of Engineers built the ocean jetties, harbor revetments, and seawalls in Morro Bay
- These facilities have been damaged in the past year by extreme storm events in early 2023 and king tide/high surf events in winter 2023-24





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- Large boulders of the revetments have been dislodged during these environmental events exposing the harbor and public infrastructure to imminent risk and potential failure if not addressed

Why this Project?

- The jetties, revetments, and seawalls are necessary to protect Morro Bay Harbor from erosion and future extreme environmental events
- City of Morro Bay has neither the expertise nor the resources to properly protect the harbor
- The Morro Bay harbor includes a federal coast guard station, businesses, and represents \$40,000,000 of local economic activity annually



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Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) Project

The \$160M WRF project has moved our new water reclamation facility away from coastal hazards, treating affluent to modern standards, and will have the capability to provide a drought buffer in the future for our community through the innovative indirect potable reuse portion of the project.



- The City has received a \$9.3M grant from the Bureau of Reclamation. The City is working with the Bureau to ensure it can make full use of the grant.
- The City also received a \$61M low-interest WIFIA loan from the U.S. EPA. The City is working with WIFIA staff to extend the project completion date for the agreement and clarify regulatory oversight.