



5-Year Roadmap for West Cliff 2026 Annual Update

Purpose

The 5-year Roadmap advances the 50-year Community Vision for West Cliff by guiding priority projects, aligning City planning efforts, and supporting adaptive coastal management. Developed through extensive community input, West Cliff Implementation Committee guidance, and coordination with regulatory agencies, the Roadmap identified five key projects for implementation. This annual progress update highlights progress on these five City Council-approved projects, including key milestones and next steps, along with a brief summary of projects and planning efforts outside the Roadmap that are in progress or have been completed in the West Cliff area.

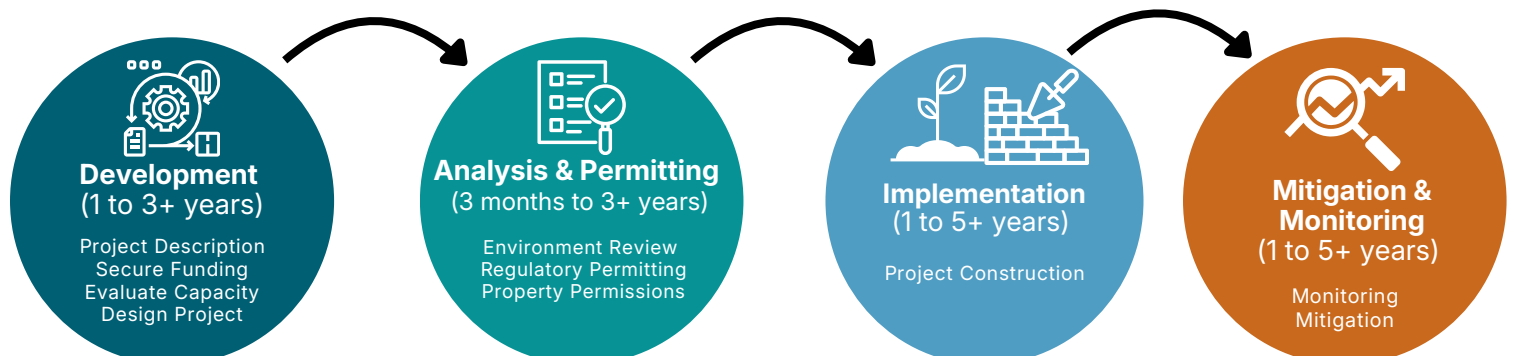
Context

- By identifying projects consistent with the Vision, the City is able to allocate resources to those projects and move them forward in the next five years.
- The City will make progress on the existing projects and the prioritized projects, while also responding to maintenance issues, ongoing disaster recovery, impacts of erosion, and other unplanned events that may occur along West Cliff.
- Going forward, the City intends to integrate identification of the next set of priority projects along West Cliff into the City's Capital Investment Program (CIP), leveraging the pillars of the *Vision*.

Project Process

- After the 2023 storm damage on West Cliff, the City took quick action and secured expedited permits and funding due to the emergency nature of the damages.
- Developing, designing, and implementing a project requires a significant amount of City staff time planning to bring a project from concept to completion.
- It can take the City between two and five years to construct or complete a project, depending on the project's complexity, and scale.
- At each step, City staff follow regulations and respond to community concerns while keeping projects on schedule and within the allowable budget.

The graphic below outlines the project process:



5-Year Roadmap: Project Updates

Project	Status Update
Revetment Repair Project	Advanced planning and coordination for revetment repairs, including funding strategy, design scoping, and priority site assessments. Additional State funding opportunities are being actively pursued to support next phases of work (estimated completion: 2030).
Lighthouse Field Roadway Relocation	Completed 30% design and under review, with CEQA process underway and Coastal Permit submittal planned for 2026. Right-of-way acquisition in progress, and the project remains on track for 2027 construction (estimated completion: 2027).
Santa Cruz Coastal Change Monitoring Network	Refining cost-effective methods and piloting new technologies such as drone mapping and camera-based analysis. Regional coordination through the Coastal Accelerator is underway, with initial monitoring anticipated to begin in spring 2026 (ongoing).
West Cliff Infrastructure Financing Feasibility Study	Through the Coastal Accelerator, baseline data has been compiled. Currently scoping the study to assess asset risk, project costs, and funding strategies across key coastal areas. Initial analysis is underway with recommendations anticipated by 2027 (estimated completion: 2028).
Corridor-wide Master Signage Plan and Design Standards	Project scope and priorities have been defined to support cohesive design standards for the West Cliff corridor. Staff are preparing for consultant support and public engagement, with funding now targeted for FY28 (estimated completion: 2028).



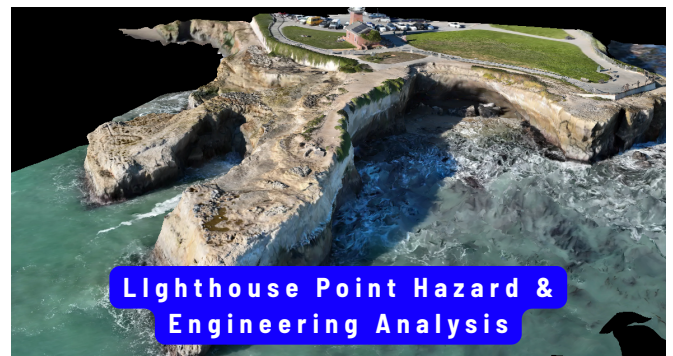
Update on Projects Outside of the 5-year Roadmap

In addition to the five projects identified in the 5-year Roadmap, the City has implemented various improvements to the West Cliff corridor and continues to respond to the dynamic conditions along this stretch of coastline. Some of these projects are highlighted below.

Project	Update
Bethany Curve Culvert Project	Repairs at Bethany Curve were completed in 26, restoring critical coastal infrastructure and improving community safety. Work included removing damaged seawalls and armoring, filling a sea cave, and rebuilding seawalls, drainage structures, sidewalks, railings, and roadway. The total project cost is approximately \$10 million, with 88.5% funded by federal disaster relief.
West Cliff Dr. Stabilization Project	Completed in early 2026, this project included construction of new seawalls, replacement of armoring, and repair of railing, roadway and multiuse path. It is expected that nearly 90% of project costs will be covered by federal disaster relief funds. The total cost, estimated at \$17,000,000 including design, construction, and restoration including native plant restoration.
West Cliff Multi-Use Path Rehabilitation	Following additional storm damage in December 2025, the City is advancing design plans to realign sections of the pedestrian path near Getchell's and potentially Its Beach. Project scope, budget, and funding are currently being updated to reflect these improvements.
Lighthouse Point Hazard and Engineering Analysis	This 12-month study is underway to assess bluff erosion and sea cave activity at Lighthouse Point, addressing long-term safety concerns. The \$387,032 effort , led by Environmental Science and Associates with local partners. The study does not propose construction or physical changes. Future projects would require separate environmental review and public input, with community engagement opportunities expected later this year as part of broader shoreline planning efforts.
Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and Climate Adaptation Plan Integration and Update	Adopted in March 2025, the City's 2025–2030 LHM-CAP is the first FEMA approved, combined hazard mitigation and climate adaptation plan in the nation. Implementation is underway, with staff coordinating quarterly to track progress and funding for 27 mitigation actions, 24 of which are already in progress or complete.

Update on Projects Outside of the 5-year Roadmap

Project	Status Update
Resilient Coast Santa Cruz 2.0- Shoreline Adaptation Management Plan (SAMP) Development	The City is advancing a long-term plan for shoreline adaptation across West Cliff, Main/Cowell Beaches, and East Cliff. Current work focuses on identifying 20–30 year projects, costs, and implementation strategies. Community engagement is underway through 2026, with anticipated recommendations going to City Council in Fall of 2026 .
Local Costal Program (LCP) Update	After coordination with California Coastal Commission and incorporation of responses to community feedback, the City Council approved the new Beaches and Bluffs Hazards chapter of the LCP. Updates to other LCP chapters are underway and staff will re-engage with the Coastal Commission and the community later this year .
Living Shorelines, Nature-Based Solutions and Sand Management Feasibility Study	The Living Shorelines, Nature-Based Solutions, and Sand Management Feasibility Study, completed in August, 2025, resulted in a technical report with recommendations, and a bilingual interactive virtual reality tour of the project recommendations guided by Otter 841. Staff are currently working on furthering design, feasibility, and funding options of recommended concepts .
Cowell and Indicators Stairs	The Cowell and Indicators stairs have been inspected. No urgent safety issues were found and minor repairs for stair treads and railings (Cowell) are planned for 2027.



Funding the 5-Year Roadmap and 50-Year Vision While Responding to Changing Conditions

While Federal and State disaster recovery funds have been critical to support recovery and resiliency efforts along our coast, they still require a local match. Proactive projects may occur concurrently with disaster recovery efforts. However, the City must identify, develop, and implement disaster recovery projects quickly in order to receive emergency funding and obtain emergency permits. This creates a situation where disaster recovery projects take precedent over proactive projects due to the availability of project funding and streamlined permitting. With the City taking a more proactive stance on addressing risk and resilience in advance of disasters, previous funding sources the City relied upon will not cover the cost of projects intended to mitigate risks. Changes in Federal and State priorities increase the need to create a comprehensive funding and financing approach which includes a blend of Federal, State, regional, and local revenue and financing options. The Financing Feasibility Study included as one of the five projects in the Roadmap aims to address this need.

The City's General Fund budget, which supports the implementation of the citywide Capital Investment Program (CIP), will likely only cover some West Cliff projects or seed funding to support them. The City can prioritize these projects over others when pursuing grants and specialized funding sources specifically built for compliance or specific types of infrastructure may be used to fund phases of projects. Larger resilience projects tend to require funding stacks, which are multiple sources of funding and financing to execute complex multi-benefit projects.



To read the entire *5-year Roadmap*, scan the QR code to the left or visit:
[https://www.santacruzca.gov/Government/
Climate-Initiatives/Resiliency/Resilient-Coast-Santa-Cruz/West-Cliff](https://www.santacruzca.gov/Government/Climate-Initiatives/Resiliency/Resilient-Coast-Santa-Cruz/West-Cliff)