

San Mateo County Backs Pacifica's Call for State Support as Coastal Climate Risk Closes a Bay Area Landmark

County joins Pacifica in asking Governor Newsom to proclaim a state of emergency for Pacifica; Window to act before fall and winter storms is closing.

REDWOOD CITY, CA, UNITED STATES, June 25, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Pacifica sits on the front line of California's changing coast, where rising seas and relentless surf are reshaping the shoreline faster than the state's recovery tools were built to handle. This week, San Mateo County issued a County Emergency Proclamation in support of Pacifica's response to the structural failure of the [Pacifica Municipal Pier](#), joining the city in asking Governor Gavin Newsom to declare a California state of emergency to cover the crisis. The city submitted its formal request for a Governor's Proclamation of a State of Emergency on June 12, 2026. With the fall and winter storm season approaching, the time to act is now.

“

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*Christine Boles, Mayor of
Pacifica*

The pier closed June 4 after city crews found cracking, separation, and displacement in the concrete abutment at Sharp Park Beach. The damage is likely the result of continuing impacts from severe storms of 2023 and 2024, combined with recent damaging high surf events. The Chit Chat Cafe, a gathering place at the pier's entrance for generations, was demolished on June 9. Emergency temporary stabilization of the pier is underway.

Built in 1973, the Pacifica Pier has been a free, open public space for more than five decades, the only pier in the Bay Area where fishing and crabbing require no license or fee. For working families, subsistence fishermen, seniors, and people with disabilities, it has been more than recreation, but a source of food, community connection, and public access to the coast. The closure is also affecting businesses throughout the Sharp Park district that depend on visitor activity generated by the pier, including local restaurants, retailers, and lodging establishments that contribute to the local economy and tax base.

“We’re on the forefront of climate change, with sea level rise and erosion,” said Pacifica Mayor Christine Boles. “What is at risk here is not just one pier. It is the shoreline our families, our neighborhoods, and our local economy depend on. We appreciate the County’s emergency declaration, and we are asking the state to work with us, while there is still time to act before winter.”

More Than a Pier

The question facing Pacifica is significant for all coastal communities throughout California. It is about how a coastal community adapts to a changing environment when the impacts of storms, erosion, and sea level rise are no longer isolated events, but an ongoing challenge. Pacifica is asking for resources to repair and protect the interconnected system of the pier, seawall, bluffs, neighborhoods, and the Beach Boulevard corridor that are increasingly threatened by the ocean.



The city has worked within California’s coastal framework for a decade, maintaining a declared local emergency for coastal erosion since 2016, and completing a structural assessment in 2023 and applying for more than \$62 million in State and Federal funding to protect and repair the pier and Beach Boulevard corridor. To date, only \$963,000 has been awarded toward these efforts, while substantial unmet needs remain.

Pacifica has spent years planning for coastal hazards, conducting engineering studies, maintaining emergency declarations related to coastal erosion, and pursuing state and federal funding. The current emergency reflects not a lack of planning, but the accelerating pace and scale of coastal impacts facing California’s shoreline communities. That experience positions Pacifica to inform a challenge every coastal community faces: how to invest in resilience, protection, and adaptation, and act before failure rather than only after.

Time is the resource Pacifica has the least of. The pier remains exposed to daily wave action, and tides are expected to run higher through the fall and winter, narrowing an already short window for action. Protective and repair work needs to begin this summer, while the weather still allows it. A Governor’s Proclamation of a State of Emergency could help provide additional flexibility and coordination between state agencies as emergency stabilization, environmental review, permitting processes, and repair efforts move forward, helping to keep an already challenging timeline realistic.

Why Now: What the County Proclamation Advances

The county's proclamation this week does three things. It affirms that the pier crisis is a disaster of regional significance rather than a single city's challenge. It supports the chain of declarations that can help unlock the California Office of Emergency Services' bridge funding while federal grant applications are processed. And it reflects broad regional support for the city's request, with the county, its full legislative delegation, and its congressional representative standing alongside Pacifica.

The Governor's proclamation for Pacifica is an opportunity for California to show how its coastal communities and the state can work together on what comes next, before the next storm makes the decision for them.

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