



City of Malibu News

23825 Stuart Ranch Road • Malibu, California • 90265-4861
Phone (310) 456-2489 • Fax (310) 456-3356 • www.malibucity.org

Media Contact:

Matt Myerhoff, Media Information Officer

C: 424-395-6450

mmyerhoff@malibucity.org

PCH SAFETY FACT SHEET

Updated 10/23/2023

The City of Malibu is committed to doing everything possible to improve safety on our 21 miles of PCH, which has long been a top priority for the community. The City was shocked and saddened by the loss of the four Pepperdine University students on October 17. Our hearts are with all of those who have been impacted by this tragedy. While the City does not control PCH, since its incorporation, Malibu has worked closely with Caltrans, the LA County Sheriff's Department and our other partner agencies to find ways to make PCH safer for residents, motorists, pedestrians and cyclists. We will continue to push for resources to achieve a higher level of safety for our community. The City has steadfastly taken steps to enhance safety on PCH, and will continue to do so, including these projects and programs:

CITY-FUNDED TRAFFIC SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS ON PCH

To date, the City has allocated and spent approximately \$39 million dollars on traffic safety improvement projects on PCH, including:

- PCH Bike Route along Zuma Beach
- PCH and Kanan Dume Arrestor Bed - The project was built to stop runaway vehicles from crashing into PCH.
- La Costa pedestrian crosswalk signal
- PCH and Big Rock traffic signal improvements
- PCH traffic signal synchronization project
- PCH median improvements project
- PCH Las Flores and Rambla Pacifico intersection improvements
- PCH and Trancas Canyon Road intersection improvements

The City currently has \$8 million of funds obligated towards future PCH safety improvement projects, including:

- PCH median improvements near Paradise Cove and Zuma Beach
- Traffic safety improvements at PCH and Big Rock Drive
- Pedestrian undercrossing at Corral Canyon Beach (by Malibu Seafood)

PCH TRAFFIC SIGNAL SYNCHRONIZATION PROJECT

- Work started in summer 2023 on the City's most significant measure to date to improve traffic safety and mobility on PCH. Completion expected in 2025.
- Communications lines will be installed between traffic signals on PCH from Topanga Canyon Blvd to John Tyler Drive to synchronize them to existing traffic conditions, and they will be controlled by the Caltrans Traffic Management Center.

- According to CalTrans, during the past 10 years, there have been more than 4,000 collisions on PCH in Malibu. Speeding and improper turns are the most common contributing factors to collisions, both of which will be directly addressed by the Signal Synchronization Project. The system can also be used to help emergency evacuations move quickly and safely. The \$34.6 million project is fully funded through County Measure R transportation funds.

PUBLIC SAFETY FUNDING, COLLABORATION WITH PARTNER AGENCIES AND LEGISLATION

- **Advocating for Lowering Speed Limits on PCH.** PCH is a state highway under the jurisdiction of Caltrans, so the City has very limited ability to make changes to PCH. However, the City does as much as possible to improve safety on PCH within its ability. Speed limits are mandated by the California Vehicle Code and require a speed survey to be conducted to set the limits. California law (AB 43) requires that when speeds are measured, the limits must be set at the speed driven by 85% of measured drivers. (Unfortunately, that can result in higher speed limits). Historically, speed limits on State highways have been set by Cal Trans, but in 2021, AB 43 was signed into law which enables local authorities to lower speed limits on state highways as well. Unfortunately, cities will be unable to lower speed limits under the new legislation until June 30, 2024 or whenever state officials update their requirements to meet this new law.
- **Advocating to bring back CHP patrols to PCH in Malibu.** The CHP stopped patrolling PCH in Malibu in 1991 when the City incorporated, citing the City's contract for law enforcement in Malibu with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. The City budgets \$100,000 for CHP On-Call Services every year, but for the past two years, CHP has been unable to fulfill any requests for assistance. According to a CHP press report, they have about 1,000 vacant officer positions across the state. CHP attributes the staffing issues to a variety of factors, including increasing retirement rates, job preferences in the private sector, and societal influence.
- **Public Safety Funding.** The City dedicates 28.2% of the General Fund, \$16.4 million, toward public safety, of which \$15 million goes toward our contract with the LA County Sheriff's Department. The City puts additional funds every year for the Sheriff's Department to do saturation patrols every weekend (specifically targeting the street racing crowd and high-horsepower vehicles which proliferate on PCH in Malibu, with frequent reckless driving, speed, racing and drifting).
- In April 2023, the City's Public Safety Commission recommended adding two additional motor officers for the FY23/24 Sheriff's service agreement, which was included and approved by the City Council in June 2023. Unfortunately, the Sheriff's Department could not fulfill the request due to a moratorium on expanding any existing contracts due to severe staffing shortages within the Sheriff's Department.
- **Sheriff's Volunteers on Patrol Program.** The City funds the program, including their patrol vehicles – they patrol and report incidents to the Sheriff's Dept, direct traffic after collisions, offer aid to motorist who have been in collisions and more.
- **Sheriff's Summer Beach Team.** The city also funds the Beach Team every summer, which patrols Malibu's beaches, focusing largely on alcohol consumption on the beach, which is illegal. Their work helps prevent drunk driving on PCH, and last summer they issued more than 1,000 alcohol citations.
- **Automated License Plate Readers.** The city started installing these tools in 2023 to offer an additional enforcement tool for Sheriff's Department to address theft, property crimes, and other public safety and crime issues in Malibu by helping to identify suspects in fleeing vehicles, stolen vehicles, suspects with outstanding

warrants, etc. The cameras are solar-powered and have backup batteries, can operate day or night, and during a variety of **weather conditions**.

- **PCH Taskforce.** For nearly two decades, the City has participated in this active coalition of community representatives, pedestrian and bicycle advocates, law enforcement, city and traffic engineers, Caltrans, and local and state elected officials. Includes cities of Santa Monica, Los Angeles, Malibu and unincorporated Los Angeles County. Collaborating and advocating for traffic safety funding, studies, etc.
- **The PCH Taskforce Safety Corridor Grant.** The grant was awarded to the City on behalf of the PCH Taskforce, funded the purchase changeable message signs for posting traffic safety and emergency messages, three pedestrian and bicycle safety assessments and training events, and educational outreach aimed at all users of the highway, including the PCH Safety Video PSA.
- **PCH Safety Study.** The study, completed in 2015 in collaboration with SCAG, examined road conditions, accident patterns, and proposes strategies to improve safety on PCH in Malibu. The study recommended safety improvements for motorists, cyclists, transit riders and pedestrians. It was funded by a Caltrans Partnership Planning Grant, with a contribution from the City.
- **Overnight Parking Restrictions ff RVs and Oversized Vehicles.** The City restricted overnight parking of oversized vehicles on multiple sections of PCH. RVs and oversized vehicles jut out into lanes, reducing visibility, forcing traffic over into the middle of the road more, making it hazardous for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.

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