



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH
CITY COUNCIL MEETING – COUNCIL MEMBER ITEMS REPORT

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: DAN KALMICK, CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

DATE: SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

SUBJECT: CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS REGARDING THE POSSIBLE RELINQUISHMENT OF PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY (PCH) TO IMPROVE VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Currently, the California Transportation Department (Caltrans) owns, operates, and maintains both Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) and Beach Boulevard as State Highways located within the City of Huntington Beach. Given that fact, Caltrans coordinates all planning, construction, and maintenance of both roads using State Highway standards and levels of service.

Given that State Highways are under the jurisdiction of the State of California, any type of changes, adjustments, or modifications have to be authorized by the State. And given that State Highway standards are deployed for both roads, it is nearly impossible to institute any local safety enhancements, such as lit crosswalks, line-of-site improvements, vehicular speed reduction efforts, or enhanced multi-use pathway / bike lane protections.

Indeed, the need for safety enhancements on PCH are numerous, and recent events and accidents have created an urgency around this particular matter. To that end, I believe that it would be important to study the possibility of relinquishing a portion of PCH, such that the City could take over ownership of the current State Highway, and engage enhanced local safety standards to improve the driver and pedestrian experiences on PCH within the City limits.

To facilitate this process, I am recommending that the City Council vote to direct staff to conduct a study regarding the overall process related to taking over from Caltrans the stretch of PCH located at the City's border with Newport Beach to Seapoint. The study should assess the potential future costs associated with the ownership of the street, as well analyzing the potential safety benefits that the City could achieve by pursuing relinquishment.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

I recommend that the City Council direct the City Manager to conduct a feasibility analysis reviewing the benefits and costs associated with taking over from Caltrans the segment of PCH that runs from the City's border with Newport Beach to Seapoint.