



**Pacific Coast Highway Median Enhancement Project**



**The Pacific Coast Highway is one of the great scenic highways in America.**

As it runs through Malibu, however, it appears neglected, weedy, and unsafe. Many of us think that PCH in Malibu is a source of public disgrace rather than civic pride.

The MalibuGreenMachine is spearheading an effort to improve this situation. Our project will not only make the highway attractive it also offers additional benefits to the community: A landscaped highway is safer, and provides huge benefits to pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

Highway landscaping enhancements offer many advantages: they alter the street character, giving it more of a residential feel; they create a visual impact and the highway is less of a “speedway;” they soften the streetscape, and beautify the city. In Malibu, the landscaped median strip will also offer an enhanced “entrance experience.”

A regularly irrigated median is a fire-safe median. It is less of a fire hazard because it offers less fuel, and can serve as an additional fire break. Environmentally, a median that is totally permeable allows rain water to penetrate, and reduces storm water runoff.

Bow Bowman, Public Works Special Projects Director, for the City, said, “I believe this is a very important project for the community and the users of PCH. It’s hard to believe it has not been done before now. It’s needed enthusiastic leadership to get it off the ground.”

**Frequently Asked Questions** regarding the Median Enhancement Project on Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu.

**PCH stretches for 27 miles in Malibu. Where does this project begin?**

The project begins in front of Malibu Creek Plaza shopping center (before Cross Creek Road just west of the Cross Creek Bridge), runs in front of Malibu Country Mart, and Malibu Colony Plaza, and extends to Malibu Canyon Drive, one and one-half miles from its beginning.

This portion of PCH passes through the heart of downtown Malibu, it has the highest visibility, and it fronts the City’s new Legacy Park.

It will also include a highway monument sign, executed in Malibu tiles, with solar lighting, that might say, Welcome to Malibu, A Way of Life.



### **What is the MalibuGreenMachine?**

The MalibuGreenMachine is a nonprofit, nonpolitical organization of volunteers with a mission to “green” public spaces in Malibu.

The MalibuGreenMachine “greens” community areas with an emphasis on native plants and water efficient landscaping. On Earth Day 2007, they helped LA County plant a rest stop area on Kanan Road immediately south of Tunnel 1. For Thanksgiving 2007, they did a community planting at the 27-mile sign on PCH just west of Trancas. They currently have a community planting in the works at the large vacant parcel on Zumirez at PCH adjacent to Prudential Realty.

The MalibuGreenMachine functions as a team effort. The group is dedicated to greening Malibu by working with city departments, neighborhood associations, and local businesses.

This nonprofit is a lean machine--it has no administrative costs, no operating expenses (except for a nonprofit insurance policy), no rented office space. All services and materials--whether the graphic design for the logo, or food for the St. Patrick’s Day Wear the Green to “Green” Malibu Party--are donated. It has no paid staff, no paid consultants. All work is done by a large number of volunteers. Thus, all monetary donations are applied 100% to the projects.

Jo Giese, founder and president, is an award-winning radio journalist, a community activist with a history of successfully landscaping Rose Avenue in Venice, California, and she was honored by *The Malibu Times* as a Citizen of the Year 2005.



## What is ValleyCrest Companies?

With over 58 years of experience, over 9,000 employees, and over a billion dollars in annual sales, ValleyCrest Companies is one of the nation's leading landscape companies.



PCH Median BEFORE



PCH Median AFTER

One of their clients is Caltrans, the California agency with jurisdiction over the Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu.

ValleyCrest is headquartered nearby in Calabasas. Burton S. Sperber, FASLA, founder and CEO, and Richard A. Sperber, President, are both Malibu residents.

From the beginning, and every step of the way, the Sperbers have been working with the MalibuGreenMachine as partner/donors to design, survey, plan, engineer, and construct this project.

## Describe the design.

Designed to Caltrans specifications, this handsome highway improvement project combines softscape (planted area) with permeable hardscape (paved area) in a unique way. The ratio is approximately 70% plants, 30% pavers.

The design. Environmentally friendly pavers executed in wavy earth tones, which suggest Malibu's unique sea and mountainscape, are combined with "waves" of planted softscape. The earth tones tie in with Cross Creek Road and Legacy Park.

Burton Sperber, a Malibu resident for over 30 years, is a Fellow in ASLA, American Society of Landscape Architects. He walked the medians one drizzly morning and personally created this design for his hometown median.



Mixing permeable hardscape with softscape reduces maintenance and irrigation.

The native plant material is being grown for this project by Boething Treeland Farms. The plant list, which is Fire Department approved, conforms to Caltrans specifications.

Caltrans will not permit plantings that exceed 4 feet high or have a trunk that exceeds 4 inches wide.

A low planting offers an additional safety benefit: in the advent of an emergency, vehicles can still use the median as an evacuation lane.

The plant selections, which have been approved by the City Biologist, were overseen by Paul Comstock, a renown horticulturist, about whom Burt Sperber says, “He’s amazing. Paul may be the most knowledgeable horticulturist in the world.”

### **Where can I see these “wavy” pavers?**

The GreenMachine did a community planting at the Malibu 27-miles of Scenic Beauty sign on PCH just north of Trancas. By late June a demonstration of the pavers should be in place at this location.

### **What about trees? Aren’t palm trees a symbol of Malibu?.**

Caltrans does not allow trees. On a conventional highway like PCH in Malibu (as opposed to a freeway), Caltrans considers trees a negative visibility factor.

### **What about the traffic safety aspect?**

Although medians can be a major amenity for a community, transportation engineers point out that medians have many important useful functions, which include improving traffic safety. As it slices through Malibu, PCH has a high accident and fatality rate. It’s possible that a landscaped median can improve this situation.

Medians can be effective in improving safety because a median better defines and separates opposing directions of traffic flow. A landscaped median helps emphasize the visual separation of the roadway.

Land forming (mounding) and woody flowering shrubs help slow and possibly deflect vehicles that may inadvertently mount the median curb. Thus a landscaped median can prevent cars from entering oncoming traffic. There is solid information that landscaped medians help reduce collisions with on-coming vehicles, and reduce the severity of a head-on collision.

Medians also increase pedestrian safety: pedestrian-friendly, they provide a safe space for people as they make their way across the street.

### **How will this be maintained?**

The City Council has voted maintenance funds for this project.

Mindful of keeping maintenance to a minimum--irrigation, pruning, plant replacement--the design reflects this concern. For example, the wavescape will be composed of individual pavers that can be popped out if they need to be replaced.

### **Why does this require irrigation? What about xeriscape, water efficient landscaping?**

The design team has specified drought-tolerant plants in a sympathetic planting. The colors are classic Malibu with a plant palette that is appropriate for Southern California's coastal environment.

As Burt Sperber says, "Any planting, even a cactus garden, requires some light water."

We are using Smart Controls, an irrigation system that maximizes water-efficiency and is suitable for the low-water usage. It is also being designed to use recycled water when this becomes available from the Legacy Park project.

The irrigation will be discrete, concealed, will not be visible to the public, and will be a system that uses the least amount of water. The irrigation water will be applied efficiently so there will be no additional run-off, thus it reduces the environmental impact and will not contribute to the City's storm water issues.

An irrigated median is also a fire-safe median.

### **Who will supply the water?**

Since the City is doing the maintenance, and water is part of maintenance, water will be supplied by the City.

Also, when Public Works recently did the reconstruction project at Cross Creek Road they included a recycled water stub-out so this project can hook in when that is available.

### **What is the environmental impact?**

Because of Malibu's location in a sensitive environment next to the Pacific Ocean, the environmental impact of any project is a serious concern.

This design poses no additional impact to the environment. Because we're replacing an impermeable (paved) median with a totally permeable median, it is more sensitive to the environment than the existing situation.

Here's one way to look at the question of environmental impact: roadside impermeable (paved) areas are polluted with discharge from motor vehicles--the pollutants land on the paved surface, get washed off in rainstorms, and end up in the city's storm water treatment plant.

In contrast, permeable (planted) areas can break down some of the by-products of vehicular discharge. For example, you're driving by a planted median, when you hit your brakes you discharge zinc and lead. Some plants can use these as micro-nutrients.

Planted areas also have the natural ability to absorb rainwater back into the ground, thus reducing run-off and lessening the environmental impact in rainstorms.

All pavers in this project are permeable.

### **What about storm water run-off?**

The design of the median minimizes excessive runoff by using permeable paving and by impounding excessive runoff in the planting areas through the use of swales, where possible.

Additionally, the MalibuGreenMachine has been in close communication with the Legacy Park Project. We have modified our design to coordinate with future improvements associated with the Legacy Park Project that aim directly at solving the city's storm water problems.

### **An important environmental endorsement from the Surfrider Foundation.**

The Surfrider Foundation, a nonprofit environmental organization with 60,000 members, is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's oceans, waves, and beaches, for all people, through conservation, activism, research, and education.

We encourage ocean-friendly gardening that helps protect the local ecosystem and marine life by reducing urban run-off.



We appreciate the GreenMachine's project on PCH. The design has been thoughtfully engineered to address CPR for the landscape: Conservatio P Permeability R Retention

We're happy to endorse the work the GreenMachine is doing, and we look forward to partnering with the GreenMachine on Ocean Friendly Gardens in your community."

### **What is the role of Caltrans?**

Caltrans owns, operates, and maintains the highway as it runs through Malibu.

In our first pre-construction meeting (September, 2006) with Caltrans' permit office, senior landscape architect, and maintenance staff, the ValleyCrest pre-construction team headed by Bill Ropp and ValleyCrest HRP Design Studio's Brian Hogan came away from the meeting with the full support and cooperation of the Caltrans staff.

This project has the approval of Caltrans.

We submitted complete design engineering plans June, 2008.

### **What's the response from the City, the City Council, the Community?**

The response from all fronts is summed up wonderfully by Sharon Barovsky, a member of the City Council, who said, "This is a motherhood-and-apple pie project. It's one of those very rare projects where no one is opposed."

As Sharon Barovsky also said, "Every home-owner is going to benefit, every business will benefit."

### **What about celebrity support?**



When Pierce Brosnan saw the renderings, he said, "Count me in!"

Pierce and Keely Brosnan hosted the GreenMachine's virtual St Patrick's Day Party 2008.

Kelsey Grammer said, “My wife and I have enjoyed living in Malibu for the last ten years. We love the community and the people we have befriended here. There is one common thread in every conversation: Malibu could use a little face-lift when it comes to PCH. It is with great enthusiasm that both Camille and I support the GreenMachine project.”

Kelsey and Camille donated \$50,000. Kelsey Grammer sees his family’s gift as a direct challenge to other civic minded-individuals to step forward. He says, “Hopefully more of our locals will feel inclined to match what Camille and I have done.”



Victoria Principal, a longtime Malibu resident, and a conscientious green gardener, also donated \$50,000. She said, “This is my way of giving thanks.”

### **How is this project being funded?**

Although the project has the full support of the City Council, and the cooperation of Caltrans, neither the City nor Caltrans have a budget for highway landscaping. However, the GreenMachine has received a \$50,000 community grant.

This is a private project financed by donations raised by the MalibuGreenMachine. The budget is \$1,559, 684.

## **What does \$1.5 million cover?**

All costs including labor and materials: constructing the infrastructure of the medians, the complex governmental permitting process, design, architectural, engineering costs, and any plant material not donated by Boething Treeland Farms. Closing parts of the the highway during construction and restricted work hours add to the budget. For example, there is traffic 24 hours a day on PCH, so when anyone is working on PCH, a safety officer is required

## **Donor Recognition**

Landowners who pay their fair share of PCH frontage /visibility, Malibu businesses, and members of the public will receive wide recognition for their contribution. Naming rights, a highway monument sign, and acknowledgment in a Donor Wall of recognition crafted in Malibu tiles (site to be determined), and being honored at the Ground-Breaking Party at the Malibu Pier on September 27, are all possibilities.

The fair share for Malibu Creek Plaza, which was previously owned by the Soboroff and Green families, was less than \$80,000, but they pledged \$100,000 so plans and permits could begin. Steve Soboroff, chair, fund-raising, says, “Sure, we’re excited about a beautiful PCH running through Malibu, but the safety factor, to us, is of even greater importance.”



Burton Sperber donated the initial design and the artist concept renderings. In addition, Burton Sperber says he’s pleased to be in a position to offer the resources of ValleyCrest Companies to design/build this project.

## **Who are the major donors? And how much money has been raised?**

As of June, 2008, we’ve raised more than half the funds.

Major donors include: Big Rock Partners, LLC, Boething Treeland Farms, who is growing the plants for the project in memory of John E, Boething, The City of Malibu, Kelsey and Camille Grammer, Malibu Bay Company, Malibu Country Mart, Michael Koss, Victoria Principal, the Soborff and Green Families, Malibu Lumber LLC, Rancho Malibu LLC, and ValleyCrest Companies.

Additional support has come from: Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Keely and Pierce Brosnan, Michael and Kate Novotny, Prudential Malibu Realty, Dan Bercu, Trancas Market, Arnold and Karen York The Malibu Times Newspaper, Coldwell Banker, Diane and Danny Klein, Ed and Laura Gillespie, Frank and Lydia Bigott/Simon, Fred Segal,

Herb Alpert, Kelly Meyer, and Olivia Newton John. Community support has come from hundreds and hundreds of neighbors and businesses.

### **What's the Business-to-Business Campaign?**

With the assistance of Michael Koss, Malibu Country Mart, the GreenMachine has launched a business-to-business campaign, urging every business that is part of the Malibu family to contribute *now* to make PCH safer, more environmentally friendly, and more beautiful. (See flyer attached.)

This business-to-business campaign stresses that a landscaped highway is good for business because it creates an enhanced “entrance experience” to the business district. It answers the question: Where is the THERE in Malibu. And it reduces the “speedway” look and softens the streetscape.

### **How long will this take? When can we see workers on PCH?**

Securing permits from the State of California, Caltrans, the City of Malibu, as well as other governmental agencies should be completed by September.

Construction is scheduled to begin September 25, and take 4-6 months.

The project can be completed by January-February 2008!

### **When can this get started?**

The project has already started! In January, 2008, the MalibuGreenMachine signed the contract with ValleyCrest for a definitive design/engineering plan--a complete set of working drawings, construction documents.

A multi-disciplinary team of landscape architects, horticulturists, and highway engineers have been holding regular meetings with the GreenMachine.

As of June, ValleyCrest and their HRP Design Studio have moved from preparing schematic-level documents to submitting to Caltrans for an encroachment permit.

### **“It's crunch time!” says Steve Soboroff, chair, fund-raising.**

“We've achieved what money cannot buy--approvals and permits,” says Steve Soboroff. “Now we're down to what money *can* buy.”

To begin construction on schedule Soboroff is encouraging civic-minded angels to step forward and help raise the final \$700,000. Soboroff says, “We're on the five yard line and we need just a few more angels to help us kick this across to the goal.”

### **Are donations tax-deductible, and how should my check be made out?**

Checks can be made payable to MalibuGreenMachine.

The MalibuGreenMachine is a 501C-3, a non-profit with tax exempt status, and can receive tax-deductible donations directly. Please send checks to MalibuGreenMachine, 23852 PCH, # 718, Malibu, California 90265.



You can also pay with PayPal. You don't need a PayPal account. Use your credit card. It's easy and green. Go to [MalibuGreenMachine.org/donation](http://MalibuGreenMachine.org/donation)

### **Save The Date--September 27**

Alexander Leff has offered the Malibu Pier for a ground-breaking party Saturday, September 27, 4-7 PM, to celebrate the MalibuGreenMachine beginning work on the highway. The party, which will honor donors, will feature live music and dancing on the pier!



*Thank you for taking the time to read this participation package. Please visit us online at [malibugreenmachine.org](http://malibugreenmachine.org).*

For the enhancement of the Malibu Civic Center medians

# The Time is NOW!

ONLY 4 months left for your business to get involved in this important civic project.

A landscaped highway is good for your business because:

- Creates an enhanced "entrance experience" to the business district
- Answers the question: Where's the THERE in Malibu?
- Reduces the "speedway" look and softens the streetscape
- The new work on Cross Creek Road was funded with public money...  
OUR PROJECT IS PRIVATELY FUNDED

**Adopt**  
This highway monument marker with solar lighting for only \$250,000

**Be an Angel.**  
Join the community feeling and become part of the Malibu Family

**Plants**  
70% plants/30% environmentally friendly permeable pavers. Native plant material grown for us and donated by Boething Treeland Farms.

**Construction**  
Starts Fall 2008!  
Begins at Cross Creek Bridge and extends 1.4 miles to Malibu Canyon.

**Design**  
Wavy pattern suggests Malibu's unique sea and mountain-scape. Earth tones tie in with Cross Creek Road and Legacy Park.

PCH Median at Cross Creek



PLEASE HELP US. SEND YOUR 2008 TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION NOW!

## Join the Donor Wall of Recognition (site to be decided)

Help complete our highway enhancement project on PCH. This is a private project financed by People like you. Our budget is \$1.5 million, and we've raised more than half the funds!

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

eMail (for "greener" correspondence)

Donations of \$1,000 or more will get you on our Donor Wall.

- Donor Levels:**
- \$100,000 and up
  - \$50,000
  - \$25,000
  - \$15,000
  - \$10,000
  - \$5,000
  - \$1,000
  - \$500

Visit...  
**MalibuGreenMachine.Org**  
or CALL to get involved  
**(310) 457-0624**



**Go Greener with PayPal...**  
You don't even need a PayPal account, use your credit card. It's EASY and GREEN.  
Go to... <http://MalibuGreenMachine.org/donation>

Mail your donation to... MalibuGreenMachine  
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