



April 17, 2024

Delivered via Email

Oceanside City Council
300 N Coast Hwy
Oceanside, CA 92054

Re: Need for Coastal Zone Funding in City Budget

Honorable Mayor and City Council,

Surfrider Foundation is a nonprofit environmental organization that engages a vast volunteer network of ocean users to protect our world's ocean, waves, and beaches. Surfrider's San Diego County Chapter (Surfrider) represents thousands of ocean recreation users — from dedicated surfers to occasional beachgoers — as well as the coastal communities and economies that rely on them throughout the region. **Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the need to prioritize more funding for coastal zone management in the annual City budget.**

Oceanside's beaches are one of its main economic drivers, bolstering both a strong local coastal recreation economy in addition to being the bedrock of its tourism economy. And yet year after year, City budgets dedicate minimal funding to coastal zone and shoreline management *while* our beaches erode away and fall into disrepair at an alarming rate. The rate of beach loss will only worsen as sea levels rise into the next century.

On behalf of Oceanside's ocean, waves, and beaches, and the millions of people who use and love them every year, Surfrider implores the City Council to take a hard look at this systemic neglect of our shoreline. Some recent City-led efforts have been promising, but we must continue to turn the tide and prioritize our precious shoreline for all people, and for the coastal recreation and tourism economies that many of our residents rely upon for their livelihood.

Please accept the following suggestions as starting points:



- Dedicate an annual coastal management budget of \$300-400K to a fund that is overseen by the Coastal Zone Administrator and the City Manager.
 - The City already lost a SCOUP permit opportunity for 90c³ of sand due to lack of funding.
 - Without a dedicated shoreline budget, the City will continue to miss funding opportunities because many of them require a partial match. Oceanside is currently unattractive to federal and state grantors due to its lack of dedicated shoreline funding, not to mention the City's history of shoreline neglect. Grants have *already* been denied due to this reality.
- Hire a junior level associate to work under the Coastal Zone Administrator, specifically to help with shorter-term sand projects and shoreline management (SCOUP opportunities, funding opportunities, monitoring projects like dune restoration, etc.).
- Measure X has a specific line item for South Strand infrastructure repairs. *Let's use it.*
 - City-placed riprap boulders are scattered all over public tidelands. Revetment permits require the permit holder to periodically remove boulders that have fallen onto public beach space and restack them into the permitted revetment area. It is well past time the City uses its dedicated Measure X funding to clear its boulders off our beach, which will result in more beach space for the public to enjoy.
 - Both beach access along the South Strand are in desperate need of repairs. Wisconsin St. access is closed, and the staircase further north is practically unusable.
- Dedicate additional Measure X revenues into a shoreline improvements fund.

Surfrider understands that resources are limited, but we are certain that enacting the aforementioned suggestions would ultimately pay dividends for the City by improving its beaches and shoreline. However, we also offer the following ideas for how to raise a portion of these critical dollars that our coastal zone so desperately needs:

- Consider raising the Transit Occupancy Tax (TOT) from its current 10%. The TOT ranges up to 15% in several cities in California, including Anaheim and Malbu. Los Angeles is at 14% along with at least 10 other cities.
- Dedicate a percentage of all TOT revenue directly into a fund for shoreline improvements.
- Alternatively, dedicate a percentage of TOT revenue from all *STRs and hotels in the Coastal Zone* into a fund for shoreline improvements.



- The City of Encinitas used this strategy and dedicated 2% of its TOT revenues into a shoreline improvement fund. This has been extremely beneficial to the City's shoreline replenishment efforts!
- Direct Development Services/Code Enforcement to uphold the City's land use planning laws and regulations, which require citations to be given to property owners who engage in unpermitted development along their beachfront. The amount of illegal, unpermitted development along S Pacific St. homes is shocking and the City has done little to rectify these longstanding violations.
- Seek additional funding from the California Coastal Commission to re-launch the City's Local Coastal Program Update, which has been stalled since 2020.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this item. We hope these suggestions will be helpful to the overall conversation about how to overhaul and improve the City's shoreline management. We *must* do more to protect and preserve Oceanside's precious coastal resources. The City, its residents, and its visitors derive so much from our coast. Let's ensure we give as much as we take.

For our Ocean, Waves, and Beaches,

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