PaliBu
Malibu Pacific Palisades Chamber of Commerce

MALIBU PACIFIC PALISADES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - OVERALL FEEDBACK

The Palisades-Malibu Chamber of Commerce appreciates the tremendous amount of work that has gone into the Long-Term Recovery Plan. The Economic Recovery chapter correctly recognizes that rebuilding the commercial district is inseparable from rebuilding the residential community. Businesses need customers, residents need services, and both depend upon functioning infrastructure, mobility, and confidence in the future.

We encourage the City to move beyond planning toward implementation by identifying catalytic projects that accelerate private investment and shorten the timeline for economic recovery.

---

1. PUT CAPITAL TO WORK

The draft repeatedly identifies access to capital as one of the greatest barriers to recovery. We agree completely. Businesses consistently report that insufficient financing remains one of the primary obstacles to reopening.

Rather than beginning another exploratory process, the City should actively partner with organizations already assembling recovery financing.

For example:

- White-label CDFI lending products
- revolving recovery loan funds
- gap financing
- tenant improvement financing
- façade improvement loans
- bridge financing while insurance claims are resolved

These tools should be designed specifically for post-disaster commercial recovery rather than relying on programs that largely exclude Pacific Palisades because of income-based eligibility requirements.

---

2. FOCUS ON CATALYTIC COMMERCIAL PROJECTS

Recovery will not occur business-by-business alone.

The City should identify several highly visible commercial corridors and catalytic redevelopment projects that restore confidence, attract investment, and signal that Pacific Palisades is returning.

Projects that activate commercial districts create momentum for every surrounding business.

---

3. RECOGNIZE THAT POPULATION RECOVERY REQUIRES COMMERCIAL RECOVERY

The draft correctly notes that businesses are waiting for residents while residents are waiting for businesses.

Rather than treating this as a tracking exercise alone, recovery strategies should actively accelerate both simultaneously through coordinated reopening incentives, temporary activation programs, and commercial placemaking.

---

4. GENTLE DENSITY SHOULD BE PART OF RECOVERY

Long-term economic sustainability depends upon restoring enough residents, employees, and customers to support neighborhood-serving businesses. (Something we have measured though utility connections and available data tracking return.)

While Pacific Palisades values its character, the community should begin an honest conversation around **gentle density**—thoughtful increases in housing opportunity that strengthen local businesses without fundamentally changing neighborhood identity.

As discussed with City staff, there appears to be little appetite for reducing allowable density. The more productive discussion is how to guide modest, context-sensitive growth that supports a walkable commercial village and a stronger tax base.

---

5. TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS AS ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

PCH is a commercial lifeline for Pacific Palisades and Malibu. It connects Pacific Palisades to Malibu, Santa Monica, Los Angeles. It serves residents, visitors and employees making it a vital route for healthy commerce.

PCH is an essential element of restoring commerce and should be prioritized as such. Post-Palisade Fire, it is imperiled as a result of sand, soil and road erosion, threatening its stability from both mountain and coastal sides.

The recovery plan should explicitly recognize that restoring and improving Pacific Coast Highway is essential to both commercial and residential recovery.

Transportation investments should prioritize:

- dependable access
- congestion relief
- emergency redundancy
- visitor access
- freight and deliveries
- regional connectivity

---

6. SUPPORT THE FERRY DEMONSTRATION

The Chamber strongly encourages the City to support continued evaluation of the proposed ferry demonstration.

While not a replacement for roadway improvements, the ferry could become an important supplemental transportation option that:

- reduces pressure on PCH
- provides redundancy during emergencies
- supports tourism
- strengthens regional mobility
- connects Pacific Palisades with neighboring coastal communities

Innovative transportation options deserve serious evaluation as part of long-term resilience.

---

7. BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD BE DELIVERY PARTNERS

The Chamber appreciates being identified as a project partner throughout the Economic RSF.

However, local organizations should not simply be consulted.

Organizations such as the PaliBu Chamber can actively deliver programming through:

- business outreach
- financing education
- technical assistance
- business recruitment
- marketing campaigns
- commercial district activation
- data collection

- grant administration
- recovery convenings

The City should leverage these existing community institutions as implementation partners.

---

8. MEASURE SUCCESS BY OUTCOMES

The Chamber is working on a needs assessment survey for the commercial areas that is informed by the experience of some organizations that have successfully assessed need though surveys in Altadena, and by the experience of City Managers and local leaders who have experienced recovery and commercial revival in communities not unlike ours.

Finally, the Chamber encourages the City to establish measurable economic recovery benchmarks.

Examples include:

- businesses reopened
- commercial vacancy rate
- square footage returned to service
- jobs restored
- private investment leveraged
- residents returned
- pedestrian activity
- sales tax recovery
- business confidence

Recovery should be evaluated not simply by plans completed, but by economic activity restored.

---

9. CLOSING

The Chamber supports the overall direction of the Economic Recovery Strategy and looks forward to partnering with the City in its implementation. Pacific Palisades has an opportunity to become a national model for post-disaster commercial recovery—not simply by rebuilding what was lost, but by creating financing tools, transportation solutions, public-private partnerships, and resilient commercial districts that can be replicated in communities recovering from future disasters. The Long-Term Recovery Plan should embrace that larger vision.