



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 26, 2023

**WE NEED YOUR HELP TO SAVE THE NEW  
MALIBU HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING!**

Dear Malibu Parents, Staff, Students and Community Members,

Delays by the California Coastal Commission threaten the plans to construct a new high school building at Malibu High School. The Coastal Commission staff is requesting another year to review our Local Coastal Program (LCP) Amendment that includes the new high school building as Phase 1. All of the City of Malibu (City) is in the coastal zone. It is governed by its LCP. If Phase 1, the new high school building, is delayed for another year, rising costs will mean there will not be enough taxpayer money to build it. Your voice is needed to beseech the Coastal Commission to deny the staff request for an extension and to expedite the approval of the LCP Amendment within the next 60 days. Construction must begin construction early this fall to open in time for the 2025-26 school year.

We ask that you write a letter (best) or send an email to the Coastal Commission to deny the Coastal Commission staff's request for the one-year extension. All community letters will help, but letters from students who will attend Malibu High School and will be educated in this facility are most needed. (directions on next page)

Please write and send your letters and emails today to reach the Coastal Commissioners by July 7, in order for them to read and consider prior to their July 12-14 meeting when they will vote to delay the LCP Amendment up to another year.

**Background**

Malibu voters approved Measure M by 71% in November 2018, days before the Woolsey Fire. You overwhelmingly approved the development of a campus plan for Malibu Middle and High School (MMHS) and to fund construction of the new high school building on the former Juan Cabrillo Elementary site. The new high school building (Phase 1) has been designed to be a state-of-art education building that supports a progressive learning plan specifically geared for Malibu High School students. Phase 1's construction plans were approved by the Division of the State Architect (October 2022). The construction site has been cleared (November 2022). The California Environmental Quality Act Environmental Impact Report was certified for the entire campus plan, which was formatted into the MMHS Campus Specific Plan (January 2022). The contractor has been hired, and a contract for construction has been approved by the Board of Education (Feb. 2023).

Phase 1 must receive a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) from the City of Malibu to begin construction. Unfortunately, the LCP does not practically consider educational institutional buildings, such as those needed at the high school. The two paths to obtaining a CDP would be either to have the City's Planning Commission approve the CDP with variances (exceptions for Phase 1) or to have the City Council and the Coastal Commission to amend the LCP with a specific plan and then obtain a CDP from the City. The Coastal Commission staff recommended that a specific plan be developed and approved beforehand.

The specific plan route proved to be more cumbersome, more time consuming and more costly causing delays getting it approved by the City's Planning Commission and the City Council. The MMHS Campus Specific Plan was sent to the Coastal Commission for approval in October 2022. The Coastal Commission staff continued to request more information delaying their review. The Coastal Commission staff began their 90-day review in April. They are now requesting an additional year to review the submittal. Following their review, the LCP Amendment will need to be heard and approved by the Coastal Commission.

The initial plan was to open Phase 1 for students in August 2024. Due to the delays, the best hope is to begin construction early fall 2023 to complete the building in time for the 2025-26 school year. If a one-year extension is granted and it takes up to a year to be permitted to begin construction, not only will the opening be pushed to 2026 or after, but the escalated cost will most likely exceed the amount of bond funds available, either killing the project as conceived or requiring more taxpayer funding.

### **How to write to the Coastal Commission:**

(physical letters have a greater impact than emails)

California Coastal Commissioners  
455 Market St. Suite 300  
San Francisco, CA 94105

South Coast District  
California Coastal Commission  
310 E. Ocean Blvd. Suite 300  
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: Local Coastal Program Amendment No. LCP-4-MAL-22-0043-1  
(MMHS Campus Specific Plan – Malibu LCPA No. 21-002)

### **How to email to the Coastal Commission:**

To: [Donne.Brownsey@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:Donne.Brownsey@coastal.ca.gov); [Caryl.Hart@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:Caryl.Hart@coastal.ca.gov); [Effie.Turnbull-Sanders@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:Effie.Turnbull-Sanders@coastal.ca.gov); [Effie.Turnbull-Sanders@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:Effie.Turnbull-Sanders@coastal.ca.gov); [Linda.Escalante@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:Linda.Escalante@coastal.ca.gov); [Roberto.Uranga@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:Roberto.Uranga@coastal.ca.gov); [Karl.Schwing@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:Karl.Schwing@coastal.ca.gov); [Steve.Hudson@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:Steve.Hudson@coastal.ca.gov)

RE: Local Coastal Program Amendment No. LCP-4-MAL-22-0043-1  
(MMHS Campus Specific Plan – Malibu LCPA No. 21-002)

It helps to make your letter unique rather than a form letter. This will help it to be read and receive a greater impact. We have included some suggested language and a sample letter template below.

### **Primary Message:**

**Please deny staff's request for a one-year extension of the MMHS Campus Specific Plan – Malibu Local Coastal Plan Amendment. Please require staff to expedite their review and place it on the Coastal Commission agenda in August.**

### **Let them know who you are:**

Please tell them who you are and how the completion of Phase 1 will impact you:

I am a seventh grader at Malibu Middle School. To improve my education, I need to start ninth grade in a new high school building.

I'm starting fifth grade at Webster Elementary this fall. When I go to Malibu High School, I want to go to the best school I can.

I have lived in Malibu for 20 years. I'm a taxpayer and I voted for Measure M to improve our schools. I support building the high school as soon as possible for the students and to efficiently use my tax dollars.

### **Optional Message Choices / Ideas – Consider what is critical to you and your family:**

Here are some potential talking points, you may cut and paste these into your letter or even better say it in your own words:

Malibu students need a safe, effective and modern learning environment for their academic growth and success. The new high school building will be a state-of-art education learning space.

We've already missed the 2024 deadline impacting the 400 students who would have been in better learning facilities for the 2024-25 school year. This already means 100 rising juniors will never step foot in the new building. Further delays will jeopardize opening of the high school building for the 2025-26 school year.

Malibu Park Middle School was constructed in the 1960s to be a middle school. The high school was added to the site in the 1990s. The high school was essentially shoe-horned into the middle school campus. The high school students need a campus built for their scale and their needs.

One goal of the Phase 1 is to separate the high school from the middle school. This new high school building will create a unique and separate identity for the schools that match their maturity and learning level. Separate schools can provide several benefits, including tailored educational experiences, age-appropriate social environments, and enhanced opportunities for personal growth.

Middle school and high school students have different academic requirements. High school curricula often that involves more specialized subjects and advanced coursework that require specialized facilities to support learning. This campus will provide optimal learning spaces for these students.

Adolescence is a critical period for social development, and students often benefit from interactions with peers of similar age and maturity levels. A separate high school will provide a dedicated space for high school students to form their own social circles, engage in age-appropriate activities, and develop their unique identities. It will allow the middle school students to have space to be at their level. Each campus can develop its own traditions, extracurricular activities, and student-led organizations, allowing students to take ownership of their experiences.

School facilities are the 'Third Teacher.' Along with students directing their own learning and teachers guiding them, the facilities create the environment for learning to occur. Whether it is state-of-the-art education technology or open spaces with daylight and fresh air, the facilities significantly enhance learning. The facilities need to challenge students as they prepare for college and careers. Students emphasize the need for up-

to-date facilities, advanced courses, and quality instruction to compete with students from other schools.

Delaying approval of the LCP Amendment will needlessly cost taxpayer funds. A one-year delay could easily increase the cost of revitalizing the campus by \$14 million in construction escalation. This will exceed the budget jeopardizing Phase 1.

The much needed and anticipated new high school is at risk of potentially not being built or being significantly reduced in scope due to delay-caused cost increases.

Students are now in bungalows and aging buildings without infrastructure and spaces conducive to the needs of today's students. The new high school will provide them with access to better laboratories, flexible learning spaces, state-of-the-art technology, flexible furniture, and other essential learning tools.

Our Malibu community of students and families has suffered many challenges over the past decade and deserve a quality school facility to ensure academic and social emotional success.

Delaying the construction of our new high school means we will continue to miss out on essential resources and technologies that are crucial for a 21st-century learning environment. We need modern classrooms, state-of-the-art equipment, and updated facilities.

A delayed construction timeline will have economic consequences for our community. The longer it takes to complete the new high school, the longer it will take and more it will cost to complete the next three phases of the campus plan, including finishing the middle school, special education suite, performing arts complex, community pool and wellness center.

We hope these suggestions assist you in crafting a letter letting the Coastal Commission that you want this project to be approved now so it can move forward. No more delays. Please submit by July 7 and let your voice be heard! (Sample letter template is below. Customize as you see fit.)

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Carey Upton, Chief Operations Officer, [cupton@smmusd.org](mailto:cupton@smmusd.org).

Thank you for your interest in making a better high school for students, staff and families in Malibu to enjoy for decades.

Sincerely,

Mark O. Kelly, Ed.D.  
Interim Superintendent  
SMMUSD

**Sample Letter**

*Date (submit by July 7, 2023)*

California Coastal Commissioners  
455 Market St. Suite 300  
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Local Coastal Program Amendment No. LCP-4-MAL-22-0043-1  
(MMHS Campus Specific Plan – Malibu LCPA No. 21-002)

Dear California Coastal Commissioners,

Please vote against staff’s request for a one-year extension for processing the MMHS Campus Specific Plan – Malibu Local Coastal Plan Amendment. Please require staff to expedite their review and place it on the Coastal Commission agenda.

*I am a tell them who you are. Tell them why this project is important to you.*

*List a few reasons or cut/paste some from the list that are important to you.*

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

*Your Name*

*Address, email or other contact information.*