



COACHELLA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

Established in 1918 as a public agency

GENERAL MANAGER
Jim Barrett

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
Robert Cheng

CLERK OF THE BOARD
Sylvia Bermudez

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
Dan Charlton

March 2, 2026

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Schiff
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ken Calvert
United States House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Request for Support for City of Palm Desert's Highway 74 Project, Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending

Dear Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, and Congressman Calvert:

On behalf of the Coachella Valley Water District, I am writing to express strong support for the City of Palm Desert's Highway 74 Safety and Mobility Improvements Project and the City's request for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending. The total project cost is estimated at \$8 million and will fund critical roadway improvements to enhance public safety, traffic operations, and long-term corridor reliability along this essential route.

Highway 74 is a primary connector for the Coachella Valley and a heavily traveled corridor for residents, commuters, visitors, and emergency response. Current operational constraints and congestion contribute to safety risks and delays. This project will implement targeted infrastructure and traffic improvements intended to reduce conflict points, improve traffic flow, and provide safer conditions for all roadway users.

As the water district serving the Palm Desert area, Coachella Valley Water District recognizes the importance of reliable and safe transportation infrastructure. Improvements on Highway 74 will support day-to-day travel for our community, strengthen access to essential services, and improve overall regional mobility.

The project is currently under contract for design and is scheduled for construction in 2028. Federal support through Community Project Funding would help the City advance these improvements and ensure Highway 74 continues to meet the transportation needs of a growing community and the region.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

J. M. Barrett
General Manager



CITY OF PALM DESERT

73-510 FRED WARING DRIVE
PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA 92260-2578
TEL: 760-346-0611
INFO@PALMDESERT.GOV

March 3, 2026

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ken Calvert
United States House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Schiff
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Request for Support for City of Palm Desert's Highway 74 Project,
Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending**

Dear Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, and Congressman Calvert,

On behalf of the City of Palm Desert, I respectfully request your support for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending for the City's Highway 74 Safety and Mobility Improvements Project. The total project cost is estimated at \$8 million and will fund critical roadway improvements to enhance public safety, traffic operations, and long-term corridor reliability along this essential route.

Highway 74 is a primary connector for the Coachella Valley and a heavily traveled corridor for residents, commuters, visitors, and emergency response. Current operational constraints and congestion contribute to safety risks and delays. This project will implement targeted infrastructure and traffic improvements intended to reduce conflict points, improve traffic flow, and provide safer conditions for all roadway users.

The project is currently under contract for design and is scheduled for construction in 2028. Federal support through Community Project Funding would help the City advance these improvements and ensure Highway 74 continues to meet the transportation needs of a growing community and the region.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of the City of Palm Desert. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 760-346-0611 or cityhall@palmdesert.gov.

Sincerely,

Evan Trubee
Mayor, City of Palm Desert



March 3, 2026

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United States Senate
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RE: Request for Support for City of Palm Desert's Highway 74 Project, Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending

Dear Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, and Congressman Calvert,

On behalf of Coachella Valley Disaster Preparedness Network I am writing to express strong support for the City of Palm Desert's Highway 74 Safety and Mobility Improvements Project and the City's request for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending. The total project cost is estimated at \$8 million and will fund critical roadway improvements to enhance public safety, traffic operations, and long-term corridor reliability along this essential route.

Highway 74 is a primary connector for the Coachella Valley and a heavily traveled corridor for residents, commuters, visitors, and emergency response. Current operational constraints and congestion contribute to safety risks and delays. This project will implement targeted infrastructure and traffic improvements intended to reduce conflict points, improve traffic flow, and provide safer conditions for all roadway users.

As an all-volunteer nonprofit serving the Palm Desert area, Coachella Valley Disaster Preparedness Network recognizes the importance of reliable and safe transportation infrastructure. Improvements on Highway 74 will support day-to-day travel for our community, strengthen access to essential services, and improve overall regional mobility.



The project is currently under contract for design and is scheduled for construction in 2028. Federal support through Community Project Funding would help the City advance these improvements and ensure Highway 74 continues to meet the transportation needs of a growing community and the region.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mitch Brown
President
CVDPN - Coachella Valley Disaster Preparedness Network
Cell: (323) 527-8405
Email: Mitch@CVDPN.org





DESERT SANDS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

47-950 Dune Palms Road • La Quinta, California 92253 • (760) 777-4200 • FAX: (760) 771-8505

March 2, 2026

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Schiff
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
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The Honorable Ken Calvert
United States House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: Request for Support for City of Palm Desert's Highway 74 Project,
Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending**

Dear Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, and Congressman Calvert,

On behalf of Desert Sands Unified School District, I am writing to express strong support for the City of Palm Desert's Highway 74 Safety and Mobility Improvements Project and the City's request for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending. The total project cost is estimated at \$8 million and will fund critical roadway improvements to enhance public safety, traffic operations, and long-term corridor reliability along this essential route.

Highway 74 is a primary connector for the Coachella Valley and a heavily traveled corridor for residents, commuters, visitors, and emergency response. Current operational constraints and congestion contribute to safety risks and delays. This project will implement targeted infrastructure and traffic improvements intended to reduce conflict points, improve traffic flow, and provide safer conditions for all roadway users.

As a school district serving the Palm Desert area, Desert Sands Unified School District

recognizes the importance of reliable and safe transportation infrastructure. Improvements on Highway 74 will support day-to-day travel for our community, strengthen access to essential services, and improve overall regional mobility.

The project is currently under contract for design and is scheduled for construction in 2028. Federal support through Community Project Funding would help the City advance these improvements and ensure Highway 74 continues to meet the transportation needs of a growing community and the region.

Thank you for your consideration,



Jordan Aquino
Assistant Superintendent, Business Services
Desert Sands Unified School District



ROBERT FISH, FIRE CHIEF

210 WEST SAN JACINTO AVENUE, PERRIS, CA 92570-1915

BUS: (951) 940-6900, WWW.RVCFIRE.ORG

March 2, 2026

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ken Calvert
United States House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Request for Support for City of Palm Desert’s Highway 74 Project, Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending

Dear Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, and Congressman Calvert,

On behalf of CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department, I am writing to express strong support for the City of Palm Desert’s Highway 74 Safety and Mobility Improvements Project and the City’s request for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending. The total project cost is estimated at \$8 million and will fund critical roadway improvements to enhance public safety, traffic operations, and long-term corridor reliability along this essential route.

Highway 74 is a primary connector for the Coachella Valley and a heavily traveled corridor for residents, commuters, visitors, and emergency response. Current operational constraints and congestion contribute to safety risks and delays. This project will implement targeted infrastructure and traffic improvements intended to reduce conflict points, improve traffic flow, and provide safer conditions for all roadway users.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS • JOSE MEDINA • KAREN SPIEGEL • CHUCK WASHINGTON • V. MANUEL PEREZ • YXSTIAN GUTIERREZ •

PROUDLY SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:

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@CALFIRERRU

CAL FIRE RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE

ROBERT FISH, FIRE CHIEF

210 WEST SAN JACINTO AVENUE, PERRIS, CA 92570-1915

BUS: (951) 940-6900, WWW.RVCFIRE.ORG

As a public safety - governmental organization serving the Palm Desert area, CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department recognizes the importance of reliable and safe transportation infrastructure. Improvements on Highway 74 will support day-to-day travel for our community, strengthen access to essential services, and improve overall regional mobility.

The project is currently under contract for design and is scheduled for construction in 2028. Federal support through Community Project Funding would help the City advance these improvements and ensure Highway 74 continues to meet the transportation needs of a growing community and the region.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cody Wright

Cody Wright, Division Chief
CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department
951-355-4360
Cody.Wright@fire.ca.gov

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS • JOSE MEDINA • KAREN SPIEGEL • CHUCK WASHINGTON • V. MANUEL PEREZ • YXSTIAN GUTIERREZ •

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FAX (916) 319-2147

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RANCHO MIRAGE, CA 92270
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FAX (760) 346-6506

Assemblymember.Wallis@assembly.ca.gov
<https://ad47.asmtc.org/>



COMMITTEES
VICE CHAIR, INSURANCE
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INDEPENDENT RESTAURANT INDUSTRY IN
CALIFORNIA
MASTER PLAN FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN
CALIFORNIA
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 3 ON
EDUCATION FINANCE
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 5 ON STATE
ADMINISTRATION

March 4, 2026

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ken Calvert
United States House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Schiff
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: City of Palm Desert: Highway 74 Project, Community Project
Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending Request**

Dear Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, and Congressman Calvert:

Highway 74 Improvements in the City of Palm Desert warrant strong support for Community Project Funding. This project represents an important investment in regional mobility, public safety, and the long-term reliability of a key transportation corridor serving residents and commuters throughout the Coachella Valley.

The Highway 74 project is currently under contract for design and is scheduled for construction in 2028. The effort will modernize critical roadway infrastructure and incorporate technological upgrades that improve traffic flow and operational efficiency. These improvements will help address existing roadway challenges while preparing the corridor to meet the region's future transportation demands.

Highway 74 serves as a vital connection for the community, and continued growth throughout the Coachella Valley has increased pressure on the corridor's existing infrastructure. The proposed upgrades will improve safety for motorists, enhance traffic movement, and strengthen the overall functionality of this important regional route. Ensuring the roadway can safely and efficiently accommodate current and future travel patterns is essential for residents, visitors, and the local economy.

Hon. Alex Padilla
Hon. Adam Schiff
Hon. Ken Calvert
March 4, 2026
Page 2

The total project cost is estimated at \$8 million and will support necessary infrastructure improvements and modernization efforts to ensure the corridor remains a safe and reliable transportation asset for the community.

Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting infrastructure investments that strengthen mobility and public safety in our region. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 760-346-6342 or at Assemblymember.Wallis@assembly.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Greg Wallis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

GREG WALLIS
Assemblymember, 47th District

GW:fo

Desert Sun.

TRAFFIC

'Lives are at stake': Mountain residents call for long-term fixes to Highway 74



Tom Coulter

Palm Springs Desert Sun

Published 7:00 a.m. PT Jan. 9, 2025 | Updated 2:02 p.m. PT Jan. 10, 2025

For more than two decades, Rachel Ramos has lived in Pinyon Crest, a neighborhood in the mountains just off Highway 74, the only road for her and her neighbors to make frequent trips down to the Coachella Valley.

The road, which climbs several thousand feet from the desert floor through the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto mountains, has many switch-backs that hug the mountainside, with steep drop-offs and low visibility around corners. In 2024, at least [two people](#) died driving it, while another survived after [falling](#) 200 feet off the road's edge.

While the road has long been dangerous, many residents say it's worse than ever.

Many residents say the Highway 74 switch-backs have fallen into disrepair over the past year, creating more hazards for motorists. They've also reported seeing more semi-trucks using the primarily two-lane road, possibly as a way to avoid weigh stations on main freeways.

"I have never seen so much corrosion on this highway since I have lived up here," Ramos said in an email. "The danger of that road is (already) high and now with those holes and rocks it makes it more dangerous."

Alison Kelemen, also of Pinyon Crest, uses the highway several times each week to bring food to her mom, who has Alzheimer's disease and lives in Palm Desert, where the state highway ends.

Kelemen agrees that she's seen far more potholes lately, and she thinks the crack sealing done by Caltrans — the department that manages state highways — is insufficient.

“It's just like hundreds of potholes that have been patched, and the material that they use to patch the potholes doesn't hold up, so what you end up getting are big chunks of asphalt in the middle of the road,” Kelemen said.

“There are a lot of hairpin turns (on Highway 74), and you can't just drive right over a big chunk of rubble, so you have to swerve to avoid all this rubble,” she added. “It's become such a disaster up here. ... People's lives are at stake here.”

Seeking action from local officials, Kelemen started an online [petition](#) last month that has drawn more than 700 signatures, with some commenters describing the road's current conditions and close calls they've had avoiding trucks and motorcycles due to potholes.

Some incidents have turned fatal. On the morning of Halloween, Tristin Bourgeois, a 27-year-old who was living in La Quinta, [died](#) when a big rig going down the road lost control, overturned and crashed into his car heading the opposite direction.

The incident occurred less than a day after his sister's car got a flat tire traveling along the same road, according to Tristin's mother, Danielle Ellington, who lives in Anza and is among the dozens of residents calling for major upgrades to the road.

Ellington also noted that more recently, an Anza tow truck company saw roughly 30 tire blowouts over Thanksgiving weekend, as first reported by the Idyllwild Town Crier.

“It's not just one person in our family got a blowout, and the next day, my son passes away, but it is affecting a lot of people,” Ellington said. “It's just scary to drive.”

Caltrans officials say they're actively working to begin a major project in 2028, but residents of the area say that wait is too long and are pushing for more immediate action.

What's being done to upgrade the road?

Several local officials have heard complaints about the state highway's conditions and are looking to enhance the road.

Assemblymember Jeff Gonzalez, R-Indio, who recently took office and whose district includes a stretch of the highway, said the recent accidents on Highway 74 are “deeply troubling,” adding his thoughts and prayers are with all those impacted.

“Ensuring the safety of our community in Assembly District 36 remains my highest priority,” Gonzalez said in a prepared statement. “I am actively engaging with local residents and leaders to work toward effective solutions.”

U.S. Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Corona, whose district includes most of the road from Palm Desert to Mountain Center, said his office has heard the concerns and been in contact with local Caltrans officials to discuss the issue.

“We need to ensure this road is safe for drivers as soon as possible,” Calvert told The Desert Sun in an email.

Local maintenance crews with Caltrans have recently been conducting crack-sealing to fix damaged segments of the road, and they are working to begin deeper repairs, known as asphalt dig-outs, along about 5 miles of Highway 74, according to Caltrans spokesperson Carolina Rojas.

“Our hope is to begin this rehab work within the next two months,” Rojas said of the dig-outs. “All areas in District 8 have a supervisor who conducts weekly inspections and addresses all safety items as they arise. These repairs were already in the works and fall within a winter plan that each maintenance yard adheres to.”

Regarding the concerns on semitrucks using the road, Rojas said any truck restrictions would require a proposal submitted to Caltrans by local authorities, along with supporting data. In the unincorporated areas along Highway 74, such a proposal would likely have to come from the Riverside County Board of Supervisors.

It’s unclear whether such a discussion might occur. A spokesperson for Riverside County Supervisor V. Manuel Perez said Perez’s office was looking into the matter with county transportation officials, but did not provide more information by press time.

Meanwhile, the larger Caltrans project — spanning about 45 miles of Highway 74 — is expected to cost \$51.2 million and to begin in 2028, Rojas said. That project will include pavement milling and overlays, guardrail and sign panel replacements, upgraded curb ramps to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and stormwater mitigation, among other repairs.

But for residents driving along Highway 74 every day, the three-year wait until the bigger project is far too long.

“We can't wait until 2028,” Kelemen said. “That's ridiculous. ... It's just not safe.”

Tom Coulter covers the cities of Palm Desert, La Quinta, Rancho Mirage and Indian Wells. Reach him at thomas.coulter@desertsun.com.