

October 14, 2002

Honorable Chairman and Members of
the Hermosa Beach City Council

Regular Meeting of
October 22, 2002

**PROPOSED TAXI ZONE CHANGE – HERMOSA AVENUE AT PIER AVENUE
SOUTH APPROACH TO PIER AVENUE**

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Approve the relocation of the Taxi Zone in the center median at the south approach of Pier Avenue to the west side of Hermosa Avenue north of 11th Street; and
2. Approve converting the median parking area to landscaping with irrigation.

Summary:

The City has received complaints about the unsafe lane changes of the taxis parked in the taxi zone. Generally, these taxis exit the taxi zone and immediately make a right turn onto Pier Avenue crossing two lanes of traffic to do so. This is not a very safe situation as well.

It is Staff's recommendation that a new taxi zone on Hermosa Avenue be established. Currently, the existing taxi zone is located in the now defunct left turn pocket of Hermosa Avenue (northbound) at Pier Avenue. This zone accommodates up to five taxis. It is proposed that the new taxi zone be established along the west curb just south of 11th Street. Please see Attachments 1 and 2.

Background:

The Police Department staff has never been satisfied with the current taxi zone. When the bars let out in the early morning hours, especially on weekends, there are a number of people crossing the southbound lanes of Hermosa Avenue to get a taxi. This is an unsafe situation especially since many of the individuals trying to cross the street are intoxicated or under the influence. Additionally, the City has received complaints from the businesses on the east side of Hermosa Avenue – directly in front of the taxi zone – indicating that the number taxis that line up at this location sometimes block the number one lane of northbound Hermosa Avenue. There are also reports that the cabs are taking up customer parking by parking in front of the businesses on the east side of the street.

Analysis:

Staff is proposing that the relocation of the taxi zone along the west curb of Hermosa Avenue at 11th Street would create a better taxi zone. The new zone would increase the capacity from five to six cabs. Please see attachment 3. The taxi zone would be away from the businesses that would now be across Hermosa Avenue. In fact, the suggested new zone would not be in front of any businesses. Patrons of the Pier Plaza would more safely contact taxis without crossing Hermosa Avenue.

Currently, there is a two-vehicle green zone that would remain, however, it is suggested that the green zone be relocated north by one space. This would leave three metered spaces between the green zone and Pier Plaza. There are currently four metered spaces. In addition, the existing bus zone will be relocated to the west curb just south of 11th Street.

While the Public Works Commission agreed that the current practice of crossing two lanes to proceed along Pier Avenue by taxis is unsafe, they shared their concern with increased taxi traffic proceeding along 10th Street and Manhattan Avenue to reach Pier Avenue. Please see Attachment 4. Since the land use along both 10th Street and Manhattan Avenue east of Hermosa Avenue is zoned G2, R-3 and/or RP, Staff doesn't share the same concerns.

Listed below are a few options.

1. The first option considers the creation of four metered spaces in the center island. Staff opposes this option, as it would compromise pedestrian safety.
2. The second option considers enclosing the parking lane and constructing a landscaped median.
3. The third option considers using the lane for emergency vehicles only.

Staff would be in favor of enclosing the parking lane and constructing a landscaped median.

Alternatives:

1. Approve Staff's recommendation
2. Approve Staff's recommendation without the landscaped median and create an emergency vehicle parking lane.
3. Send item back to Staff for further study.
4. Take no action.

Fiscal Impact:

Based on the alternatives presented above, the fiscal impact for each would be:

1. Engineering design and construction costs for landscaped plus loss of revenue from the five metered spaces.
2. Loss of revenue from the five metered spaces.
3. None
4. None

Attachments:

1. Existing Conditions
2. Existing Conditions - Photo Survey
3. Proposed Hermosa Beach Police Department Plan
4. Minutes from the Public Works Commission

Respectfully submitted,

Concur:

Harold C. Williams, P.E.
Director of Public Works/City Engineer

Stephen R. Burrell
City Manager

Michael Lavin
Chief of Police