

October 3, 2002

Honorable Mayor and Members of
The Hermosa Beach City Council

Regular Meeting of
October 22, 2002

**REQUEST FOR INSTALLATION OF “SLOW, CHILDREN AT PLAY” SIGNS
ON HILL STREET AND 1ST STREET**

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the City Council deny the request to install “Slow, Children at Play” signs.

Background:

A resident on Herondo Street has written and has expressed concern for the safety of the children playing on the streets in their neighborhood and has requested that the City examine the feasibility of installing three (3) traffic signs “Slow, Children at Play” to inform the drivers of the presence of children on the streets.

The resident is requesting that the signs be placed as follows: “One at the entrance of Hill Street (Hill Street is a short street between Ardmore and Valley, south of Second Street), the other one at the end of Hill Street facing East, and the third one near the bottom of 1st Street right before it ends at Ardmore. (There is a stop sign there, but many cars do not stop.)”

Analysis:

Staff has investigated the concern of the resident regarding the safety of the children on their streets. Although Staff is always looking for safety improvements for the streets, these improvements are geared towards pedestrians and vehicles. By design, streets are a place for vehicles and pedestrians and are not designed as a playground for children. To do anything to create a safe play area for children on the streets is contrary to that intent. Additionally, children should be encouraged to play in playgrounds, not in the streets. No sign or traffic calming strategy can remove the inherent danger of the conflict between vehicles and children. And when there is a conflict, the child will always be on the losing end. Installation of signs such as “Slow, Children at Play” creates a false sense of security in parents and children and hence can have bad consequences.

Accordingly, it is the opinion of Staff that any signs of the type requested that may encourage the children to play on the street or may create a false sense of security while playing on the street should not be installed.

As far as the replacement of a broken blue reflector on Hill Street, which is used to locate a fire hydrant, this is a routine maintenance item that will be addressed by maintenance.

Alternatives:

1. Deny the request as recommended.
2. Approve the request.
3. Send item back to Staff for further study.

Attachments:

1. Location Map
2. Resident's Request

Respectfully submitted,

Concur:

Raymond R. Abassi, T.E., P.E.
City Traffic Engineer

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

Michael Lavin
Chief of Police

Stephen R. Burrell
City Manager

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