

November 3, 2003

Honorable Mayor and Members of
the Hermosa Beach City Council

Regular Meeting of
November 12, 2003

COMMERCIAL BANNER PROGRAM ON PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the City Council receive and file this status change eliminating the use of banner poles on Pacific Coast Highway at 1st Street for fund raising purposes.

Summary:

On October 14, 2003, the City received a notice (copy attached) from Caltrans District 7 Permit Office requiring removal of the "illegal banner" hung over Pacific Coast Highway at 1st Street. The City had been utilizing this location and the Aviation Boulevard at Prospect location for its commercial banner program for approximately five years. This program has raised funds for a number of community efforts, including funding the restoration of the Vetter Windmill, the Surfers' Walk of Fame and now primarily, the Education Foundation.

Caltrans' standards very specifically prohibit private advertising (including logos) on banners within the State Right-of-Way. Caltrans has also informed us that banners with advertising that are not removed within 30-days of written notice will be subject to a \$10,000 fine plus \$100 per day until removed. Needless to say, Staff removed the existing banner very expeditiously on October 17, 2003. This banner was relocated to the Aviation Boulevard at Prospect Avenue location to complete its time commitment. It has subsequently been replaced with a new banner with a different sponsor for the Education Foundation.

The banner poles on Pacific Coast Highway at 1st Street may continue to be used for "decorative" banners with no advertising and for Special Event signage, again with no advertising. Staff recommends continuing the commercial banner program only at the Aviation and Prospect location.

In addition to the above issue, Staff has implemented a change in the acceptable banner size. Over the past two years we've had two incidents of banner cables breaking during high winds. The most recent occurrence happened this past summer at the Pacific Coast Highway and 1st Street location. High winds whipped the banner back and forth causing cracks in the foundation and breaking the cables, which then damaged vehicles. The foundations were repaired and the banner poles returned to use but all banners have been modified with additional slits to allow wind to pass through and we've eliminated the attachments to the bottom cable. We are using tethers at the bottom corners in lieu of attaching with a bottom cable. This allows the banner to rotate and spill the wind load. Staff has discussed the size of the banner with the pole manufacturers. They have informed us that the present use of a 4-foot high by 40-foot wide banners exceeds the allowable wind loadings for the steel poles in very high wind conditions. Staff therefore requires that all new banners not exceed 3-foot high by 30-foot wide, similar to restrictions placed on Manhattan Beach's banner program. Existing banners that are 4' by 40' and are scheduled for re-use will be grandfathered, but will have added slits to reduce wind loading.

Fiscal Impact:

No impact on the General Fund but may result in reduced revenues for non-profit organizations.

Attachment: Caltrans Notice dated October 14, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

Richard D. Morgan, P.E.
Director of Public Works/City Engineer

Noted for fiscal impact:

Concur:

Viki Copeland
Finance Director

Stephen R. Burrell
City Manager