

October 20, 2004

Honorable Mayor and Members of
the Hermosa Beach City Council

Regular Meeting of
October 26, 2004

PURCHASE OF SPEED RADAR SIGNAGE FOR THE STRAND

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Approve the expenditure of \$18,861.25 for the purchase of two speed radar signs to be placed on the Strand at 11th Street and 14th Street; and
2. Appropriate \$20,000 from Transportation Development Act Funds for purchase and installation costs.

Summary:

Last August, Fortel Traffic, Inc. installed a Speed Radar Traffic Calming Device at 11th Street on the Strand. This is a solar-powered unit that the company provided at our request, for a two-month trial period. This was done as part of an ongoing effort to slow bicyclists down to our newly posted 8 mph speed limit on the Strand. The sign was set to display the actual speed of the bicyclist traveling between 5 – 10 mph and then displaying the message “SLOW DOWN 8” for speeds greater than 10 mph. The reason for this being that they did not want to encourage speeding to see how fast they could go. The unit is programmable with many display options.

The sign also recorded volume and speed data. For a ten-day period beginning September 26th and ending October 4th, the unit detected 47,599 pedestrians and bicyclists traveling at 5 mph or greater. They could have set the threshold for detection limit at .5 mph to get a total traffic count but unfortunately did not. Of those detected, 22,266 were “speeding” at over 8 mph and 15 were traveling at the maximum speed detected of 31 mph!

Staff proposes to install one of these traffic-calming devices at each end of the “bicycle walk zone” on the Strand at 11th Street and 14th Street. They will be hard-wired and therefore will not need the expensive solar panel. The total cost for two units as used in the demonstration is \$14,531.25. They also offer modified units that can also display the message “WALK BIKE” for a total amount of \$18,861.25. Staff recommends the latter option, which would help reinforce the meaning of the flashing red lights on weekends and holidays. Staff also recommends using Transportation Development Funds (TDA) funds to purchase these devices. This is a sole source purchase, as there are no other manufacturers of this type of small speed radar signage. Public Works staff will install these units and the necessary wiring.

Staff has received numerous comments from residents that thought the signs were effective. Sgt. Thompson of the Police Department also observed some calming affect and Chief Lavin supports this purchase. The signs could also facilitate periodic police enforcement of speeding on the Strand. Another idea for Council consideration would be to seek out volunteers from the community to serve as a Hermosa Beach Volunteer Patrol Officers that could help encourage observing the posted speed limit. With the aid of these speed signs, a uniformed individual could easily request individual speeders to slow down. Many cities utilize this resource for these types of issues.

Fiscal Impact:

A total of \$18,861.25 would be expended of Transportation Development Act funds. The City has a total of \$36,844 of available TDA funds.

Attachments: Vcalm Product Information Sheet

Respectfully submitted,

Concur:

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

Stephen R. Burrell
City Manager

Noted for fiscal impact:

Viki Copeland
Finance Director