

March 12, 2002

Honorable Chairman and Members of  
The Hermosa Beach Public Works Commission

Regular Meeting of  
March 20, 2002

**REQUEST FOR SPEED HUMPS ON ALLEY EAST OF HERMOSA AVENUE  
BETWEEN PIER AVENUE AND 14<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Commission recommend to City Council to authorize Staff to install speed humps on a trial basis in the alley located one-half block east of Hermosa Avenue between Pier Avenue and 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Background:**

A request has been received for the City of Hermosa Beach to consider the installation of speed humps on the alley located one-half block east of Hermosa Avenue that runs from Pier Avenue on the south to 14<sup>th</sup> Street on the north. The alley is 18 feet wide and is one-way in the northbound direction. Numerous pedestrian doors from the adjacent commercial establishments open directly onto this alley and there are numerous driveways from which vehicles back out onto the alley. The objective of the request is to reduce travel speeds on the alley and thereby improve safety for pedestrians and motorists.

**Discussion:**

The alley was monitored on various occasions and a speed survey was conducted to measure the travel speeds on the alley. The observations indicate that there is a substantial amount of interaction between vehicles and pedestrians because numerous doorways access directly onto the alley from the adjacent buildings, pedestrians use the alley as a walking route, and pedestrians cross the alley while walking between parking lots and the back doors to the commercial establishments. In addition, there are numerous driveways from which motorists back out into the alley where visibility is blocked by a wall. These activities frequently conflict with the traffic that is traveling north on the alley, much of which is using the alley as a through route from Pier Avenue to 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

The speed limit on the alley is 15 miles per hour (mph). The speed surveys indicated that 56 percent of the vehicles were traveling at speeds of 15 mph or less, that 29 percent of the vehicles were traveling at speeds between 16 and 20 mph, that 12 percent of the vehicles were traveling between 21 and 25 mph, and that 3 percent were traveling over 25 mph. The highest speed observed was 28 mph. The speed surveys were taken in the late afternoon and early evening on several days. The results indicate that a substantial proportion of the traffic is traveling at excessive speeds on this 15-mph alley, particularly when combined with the heavy level of pedestrian activity.

An action that could potentially be effective in reducing travel speeds on the alley would be the installation of speed humps. As a point of clarification, speed humps are not the same as speed bumps. Speed bumps are typically installed in parking lots and internal private streets and are typically 1 to 3 feet in width and 4 to 6 inches in height.

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Speed humps are 12 feet wide and 3 to 4 inches in height, thereby creating a gentler rolling motion for motorists instead of an abrupt jolt. Speed humps are acceptable for installation on public streets, while speed bumps are not.

The primary objective of speed humps is to reduce excessive travel speeds. Their use is often discouraged on public streets because they may affect emergency response times for fire, police, and paramedic vehicles and because they are considered aesthetically undesirable. These issues, however, are relatively minor for the proposed alley location.

As a measure to reduce travel speeds and improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, it is recommended that speed humps be installed on a trial basis on the alley east of Hermosa Avenue between Pier Avenue and 14<sup>th</sup> Street. Initial concept plans indicate that three to four speed humps would be appropriate; however, the exact number of speed humps and their locations would be identified if and when the use of speed humps is approved.

**Alternatives**

1. Recommend that Council approve the request.
2. Recommend that Council deny the request.
3. Send back to Staff for further study.
4. Take no action.

Attachments: 1. Location Map  
2. Letter of Request

Respectfully submitted

Concur:

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Richard Garland, P.E.  
Traffic Engineer

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

