



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: June 20, 2012

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TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: A NEW DIRECTION: REFORMING UNINCORPORATED AREA
SIGNAGE REGULATIONS (DISTRICT: ALL)

SUMMARY:

Overview

San Diego County is one of the largest and most diverse counties in the State of California, and is home to 18 cities, 18 federally-recognized Indian reservations, and approximately 3,572 square miles of unincorporated area. This territory's communities, towns, and villages are home to nearly 500,000 residents. These communities are unique in layout, geography, and character.

In recognition that signs welcome visitors and provide information about points of interest, historical places, and other attractions, many cities and counties across the State have policies and ordinances which allow certain types of signs to be placed in public right-of-way. Signs help tourists and out-of-town guests locate services and points of interest, provide a sense of place for current residents and add to a community's character.

The County of San Diego has policies and ordinances in place which significantly limit the placement of signage in County right-of-way. Signs meant to clearly identify communities, provide directional guidance to local points of interest, or monumentalize historical artifacts and buildings, are not allowed to be placed in the County's right-of-way or are severely restricted. The following recommendation will direct County staff to develop proposed amendments that would modify current policies and ordinances to help communities better identify themselves, monuments, and centers of commerce while emphasizing safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists alike.

Recommendation(s)

SUPERVISOR HORN AND SUPERVISOR JACOB

Direct the CAO to develop proposed amendments to Board policies and ordinances necessary to authorize the placement of monument, gateway, community identification,

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and directional signs in the County maintained right-of-way and report back to the Board in 120 days. |

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Business Impact Statement

N/A

Advisory Board Statement

N/A

BACKGROUND:

The County of San Diego significantly limits the types of signs that may be placed within County maintained right-of-way. Under current County policy and ordinances, signs that provide information about places of community interest, historical significance, or local events are generally prohibited. The County is significantly more limiting in its approach to right-of-way signs than other local jurisdictions.

Cities within our region, such as the City of San Diego, the City of Carlsbad, and the City of Chula Vista, have adopted their own policies and ordinances to regulate signage in city rights-of-way that are more liberal than the County. These jurisdictions allow monument signs, banners and other types of right-of-way signs. These signs help tourists and out-of-town guests locate services and points of interest, provide a sense of place for current residents and add to a community's character.

The County maintains nearly 2,000 miles of roads in the County's unincorporated areas. For residents and visitors alike, County roads provide an opportunity to witness our region's beauty and, like the communities they serve, these roads are diverse and often scenic. The placement of appropriate monument, gateway, community identification, and directional signs within the road right-of-way can enhance a sense of community, aid visitors and, if done tastefully, increase scenic beauty. The right to place additional signage within County right-of-way must, however, be fairly balanced against other concerns such as the safe and efficient use of County roads.

Recently, several communities in the unincorporated area have expressed a desire to create and place signage in the County right-of-way. In some cases, these are signs which would clearly identify and distinguish their community to visitors and neighbors or establish a greater sense of place and community character. In other cases, these are signs meant to provide information to visitors about points of interest and commercial districts. It is of critical importance to our unincorporated communities that tourists and out-of-town guests spend their time and money in local shops and businesses. The County should modify current policies and ordinances to help communities better identify themselves, monuments, and centers of commerce and entertainment without sacrificing safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Doing so will benefit the visitors and residents of our unincorporated communities for generations to come.

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REGULATIONS

Respectfully submitted,

BILL HORN
Supervisor, Fifth District

DIANNE JACOB
Supervisor, Second District

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQUIRES FOUR VOTES: Yes No

WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED
 Yes No

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:
N/A

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:
N/A

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:
N/A

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:
N/A

ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):
N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: District 2 and District 5, Board of Supervisors

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): N/A

CONTACT PERSON(S):

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