

From the Desk of
Michael Ross

916.923.2215 – ssorleahcim@comcast.net

TITLE: Funding Public Safety Devices and Improvements

PROBLEM: Everyday, California citizens and lawmakers are faced with the reality that funds to build, construct or operate selected public services are financially strained. One area hit hard deals with public safety improvement projects like new stop signs, cross walks, sound walls, speed bumps or traffic signals. Since there's not enough money to go around, these projects are often delayed (sometimes for years) until funds are found or some tragic event happen, forcing immediate correction of the problem. As such, public policy makers need to find alternative ways to help local governments pay for these improvements, without raising taxes.

EXAMPLE(s):

To support this legislation's need, I would like to offer two examples.

- 1) Speed bumps are a "growing need" in many California communities. But, due to financial constraints, they are often found at the bottom of the "to do list". As such, it might take 2 to 5 years to build them.
- 2) Maintenance. As governmental entities trim budgets, maintenance at all governmental levels is talking longer to do. As such, traffic lights, stop signs and cross walks are becoming expensive to repair as they get older, and are often not as energy efficient as newer designs and product. Wouldn't it be great if the businesses that are near a given crosswalk, pay for (and undertake) its maintenance and repair?

SOLUTION: One solution is to expand current programs, like those used for the Adopt-A-Highway or Adopt-A-Waterway Programs (programs where business, groups and individuals help pay for public safety improvements). For instance:

- 1) Allow businesses or individuals to "sponsor" the construction of public safety devices like those mentioned above; or
- 2) Help businesses invest in their community by allowing them to maintain various public walkways, thoroughfares and devices (from crosswalks to stop signs).

In exchange for financing this service, the business or individual would be allowed to place their logo on the project (suggested that it be no more than 15% of the project's total space).

CURRENTLY: Company X notices that the corner crosswalk needs to be repainted. As community minded citizens, they formulate a business decision and then ask the appropriate local governmental entity to repaint the crosswalk. After hearings, reports and time delay's, the city (often thanks to a shortage of money) places the project on their master "to do" list, hoping that funds will become available to repaint the crosswalk.

AFTER ENACTMENT: The business submits an application to build, construct or maintain a "recognized safety need". After approval by the political entity's designated authority (usually a planning commission), the business (in conjunction with designated oversight staff), are given permission to build, construct or maintain the selected item. In exchange for their 'help', they then place a small logo on it, measuring no larger than 15% of the project area. The agreement must also contain a maintenance agreement.

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) Priorities and service fees will be set by local authorities.
- 2) This program is an "optional program", meaning it's optional for municipalities to use.
- 3) Competition will help keep prices low and in check.
- 4) Maintenance: when maintenance is needed for the item, two options are available:
 - a) City provides the service and sends the bill to the business
 - b) Business applies for permission to conduct the repairs, at a time designed by the community.

POSSIBLE SUPPORT:

- 1) Consumer Groups

From the Desk of
Michael Ross

916.923.2215 – ssorleahcim@comcast.net

- 2) Local Governments
- 3) Businesses

POSSIBLE OPPOSITION:

- 1) Unknown

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:

- 1) This optional program, in the long run, this program will save local governments (and taxpayers) millions of dollars, while speeding up the delivery and maintenance of public safety improvement projects;
- 2) Local governments and businesses will work together to create/implement this business friendly program;
- 3) Local governments have specific entities to deal with this program;

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION:

- 1) Business logos will be plastered on everything, often causing problems for motorists (sight pollution);
- 2) This will clog local government planning commissions and agendas;
- 3) Money from the program will be mismanaged because no regulatory over site exists;

PUBLICITY:

- This novel program will provide a lot of publicity and inroads to corporate boards and support;
- Theme: Saving money while making your city safe;

HISTORY:

- This is modeled after the state's Adopt a Highway program. It has never before been introduced;

FISCAL EFFECT:

- The fiscal benefits will depend on the sponsor and agreement that the city and businesses negotiate;

SECTION AFFECTED: As per legislative council

LANGUAGE ATTACHED: Yes - An act to add Section _____ to the Government Code, relating to cities and counties.

Bill No. as introduced, _____. General Subject: Cities and counties. Existing law authorizes a county board of supervisors to permit the commercial uses of county property in specified circumstances.

This bill would authorize the legislative body of a city, city and county, or county to establish a program under which private persons or entities could establish, repair, replace, or maintain public safety devices such as traffic signals and crosswalks in exchange for being permitted to place an advertisement on the project, as specified. Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no. State-mandated program: no.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section ----- is added to the Government Code, to read: ----- . (a) The legislative body of a city, city and county, or county may by ordinance establish a program for the establishment, repair, replacement, or maintenance by private persons or entities of public safety devices including, but not limited to, signs, traffic signals, crosswalks, speed bumps and sound walls. (b) The ordinance shall designate an appropriate department, such as the planning department or zoning department, to compile a list of projects of public safety devices that need to be established, repaired, replaced, or maintained. The list shall be made public and interested parties may submit proposals to perform the necessary work for the project. In exchange for completing the project, the party whose proposal is accepted by the designated department shall be permitted to place an advertisement not to exceed 15 percent of the total space of the project area and subject to the approval of the designated department.