



# AGENDA REPORT

BEACHES, PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Date: August 13, 2013

Agenda Item 5.A.

Approvals:

Dept. Head [Signature]

Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Admin. Assistant \_\_\_\_\_

**Department:** Beaches, Parks & Recreation/Marine Safety Division

**Prepared By:** Bill Humphreys, Marine Safety Chief  
Rod Mellott, Marine Safety Lieutenant

**Subject:** *CONSIDER MODIFICATION OF REGULATIONS FOR BIKE RIDING ON THE BEACH TRAIL SOUTH OF THE PIER DURING SUMMER MONTHS.*

**Fiscal Impact:** None.

**Summary:** Staff and members of the Orange County Sheriff's Department have reviewed restrictions for bike riding on the San Clemente Pedestrian Beach Trail (Beach Trail). Based on this review, staff recommends reducing the length of the bike "walk zone" on portions of the Beach Trail south of the pier. Staff's recommendation is to allow riding bicycles south of the wooden bridge at Trafalgar canyon throughout the year, except on summer holidays and major special event days during the summer. Current regulations require that bikes be walked in this section during the summer.

**Background:** The Beach Trail was designed for use by pedestrians, dog walkers, and bike riders. However, when the trail was in the design stages, dogs and bike riding were prohibited on the beach and beach emergency service/access roads. Therefore, the ordinance prohibiting these activities required modification.

Because of the overlap of the Beach Trail and the emergency service road on the south side of the pier, special consideration and regulations were put in place to safely address: 1) the extremely large crowds on the beach and pier in the summer (trail users and beach goers); 2) use of the road by delivery, maintenance, and trash trucks; and, 3) the need for public safety vehicle access (sheriff, lifeguard, and fire). The regulations required that bicycle riders must walk their bikes on the section of the Beach Trail that overlapped with the beach service road June 15 to Labor Day.

**Discussion:** At the July 2, 2013 City Council meeting, the City Council requested that staff review the bike riding policy for the Beach Trail south of the pier, looking for options to reduce the restrictions on bike riding.

Staff reviewed the current ordinance (SCMC 12.32.010), and discussed options with an emphasis on improving trail safety and user enjoyment. Staff considered the following options (and combinations thereof):

1. *Reduce the Distance of the Restricted Area* - This option would allow bikers to start riding bikes again south of the wooden bridge between the pier and T-Street, vs. the current riding zone which resumes at the South T-Street crossing.

- Benefits: A reduction in the bike “walk zone” would allow bikers to continue riding their bikes for further distances.
  - Potential Issues: Depending on beach and trail crowds, there may be conflicts between trail users, beach goers, and/or vehicle traffic on the emergency service road.
2. *Impose Time Restrictions* - Allow bike riding prior to 10:00 a.m. and after 6:00 p.m. south of the pier, starting at the end of the asphalt apron by the Crab Shack/Restrooms.
- Benefits: Bike riding would be permissible during the morning and evening hours when the Beach Trail may be less congested due to decreased beach crowds.
  - Potential Issues:
    - Enforcement: This would create a very confusing regulation. The modified ordinance and signage would need to state that biking is prohibited on the emergency access road south of the pier between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. from June 15 through Labor Day. Due to the confusion, the Sheriff’s representatives recommended keeping the ordinance as simple as possible.
    - Crowd issues: Although there are times in the morning or evening when the Beach Trail crowd is very light, there are many other days when there are large crowds of people going to and from the beach or using the trail during these time periods – especially in the evenings on warm days.
3. *No Change* – Maintain Current Regulations
- Benefits:
    - This maintains the highest level of safety for bike riders and the trail users (including safety from vehicle traffic which is much higher in the summer).
    - This option reduces confusion for the public who have “learned” the rules by now.
  - Potential Issues: There will be times when the trail crowd is very light, yet bike riding would still be prohibited - creating frustration for bikers who must walk their bikes on an “empty trail.”

After reviewing and discussing these options and various combinations (such as a reduced time restriction and reduced distance of the bike “walk zone”), the conclusion was to recommend a reduced distance for the walk zone. This option increases the amount of trail that bikes can ride with the least impact to public safety and vehicle traffic. This is also the simplest solution, resulting in an ordinance that is easy to understand, can be noticed with minor adjustments to signs, and is easy to enforce.

### ***Recommended***

#### ***Action:***

STAFF RECOMMENDS THAT the Beaches, Parks & Recreation Commission provide a recommendation to the City Council to modify section 12.32.130 of the San Clemente Municipal Code to reduce the bike walk zone area on portions of the Beach Trail that overlay the beach service road south of the pier to the wooden bridge at Trafalgar Canyon, except on holidays and major special events from June 15 to Labor Day.

- Attachments:**
1. Diagram for option #1 above (Reduce the Distance of the Restricted Area)
  2. Diagram for option #2 above (Time Restriction)
  3. Diagram for option #3 above (No Change)

**Notification:** None









