

## REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 23, 2009

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** GREG RAMIREZ, CITY MANAGER

**BY:** MIKE KAMINO, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT:** DISCUSSION OF TEMPORARY ENHANCEMENT MEASURES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

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The request before the City Council is give direction to staff on whether to extend temporary enhancement measures for local businesses.

During the last year, the City Council has recognized the negative impact of the national economy on local businesses. As such, beginning on October 22, 2008, and with additional action taken on January 28, 2009, and March 11, 2009, and with input from the City Business Task Force, the City Council approved several temporary measures to enhance local business. Specifically, the City Council has allowed for the following:

1. Retail Banner Displays

With the issuance of a free sign permit, retail, restaurant, and hotel businesses were entitled to the display of one temporary advertising banner, not to exceed twenty (20) square feet in size.

2. Outdoor Displays of Commercial Merchandise

In addition to the current allowance of outdoor displays of commercial merchandise on the first weekend of each month for retail businesses, such displays were temporarily allowed on the third weekend of each month.

3. Commercial Lease Banners

With the issuance of sign permit, one, temporary banner advertising availability of commercial lease space, not to exceed twenty (20) square feet in size, was allowed to be displayed in each retail center.

4. Commercial Lease Window Signs

The maximum size of commercial lease window signs was temporarily allowed to be increased from a maximum size of four (4) square feet, to ten (10) square feet on commercial property.

The temporary allowance for each of the above measures has expired. As such, staff is requesting direction on whether the City Council desires to extend the measures.

Since October of 2008, fourteen (14) businesses obtained a free sign permit for the display of a retail banner. Staff conducted an informal, random telephone survey among the businesses that obtained a temporary banner permit to determine whether the banners were effective. A majority of these retail business managers found the banners to improve their business. Street and freeway exposure were given as the primary benefits. The only negative response staff received regarding the banner displays was that an over-concentration of the banners loses their effect and detracts from visual quality of the businesses and the retail centers. Staff estimates that thirteen (13) retail banners are currently displayed in the city.

Field inspections by staff revealed no significant increase in the number of retailers who displayed merchandise outdoors for the extended time period. Likewise, staff has not noticed significant increases in the number of commercial lease window signs or banner displays.

If the City Council desires to extend the time period for the temporary business enhancement measures, it is requested that a specified time period be given and staff will return with a resolution for adoption. If the business enhancement measures are not extended, staff will enforce the existing Sign Ordinance provisions.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the City Council give direction on whether to extend temporary enhancement measures for local businesses.