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CD11 AUG 06 2013

SPECIAL 1

MOTION

The recent tragedy at the Venice Beach Boardwalk has highlighted the need to explore safety improvements at one of Los Angeles' most popular destinations. On Saturday, August 3rd at approximately 6 p.m., a vehicle was driven onto Ocean Front Walk (also known as the Venice Beach Boardwalk), a pedestrian walkway filled with people, vendors and performers. The vehicle struck at least a dozen victims, with one victim suffering fatal injuries. The fatality was a young woman from Italy visiting Los Angeles on her honeymoon, an exceptionally tragic circumstance.

The incident is still under investigation; however, the event highlighted public safety vulnerabilities at Venice Beach that must be addressed. The incident also sparked necessary conversations about measures that must be taken expeditiously to treat Venice Beach less like a property of the Department of Recreation & Parks, and more like a world-renowned tourist attraction – with all the resulting benefits and challenges.

Whether to protect against a deliberate assault with a vehicle-as-a-deadly-weapon or to guard against the increased risk caused by confused motorists inadvertently driving vehicles onto Ocean Front Walk, it is clear that significant safeguards need to be taken to better restrict non-emergency and non-essential vehicles from Venice Beach. Local police officers report an average of more than 15 motorists per day drive on Ocean Front Walk, putting lives at risk and causing accidents.


To better manage crowds and direct the public in the wake of crime, tragedy, or natural disaster, it is imperative for Venice Beach to have a public address system – like most other popular and crowded venues. And to better deter criminal activity and to serve as a force multiplier for law enforcement, it is worthwhile to explore enhancing or expanding installation and operation of closed circuit video cameras. Moreover, it is prudent to assess whether public safety resources at Venice Beach are sufficient.

On its busiest weekends, the Venice Beach Boardwalk receives more than 100,000 visitors per day, which include locals and tourists from around the world. Ensuring safety at one of Los Angeles' most popular attractions is paramount, and this incident has called into question the adequacy of the current safety measures. The appropriate City departments should evaluate all potential options, and identify the associated costs in the most expeditious manner.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council determine, as provided in Section 54954.2(b)(2) of the Government Code, and pursuant to Rule 23 of the Rules of the City Council, that there is a need to take immediate action on this matter AND that the need for action came to the attention of the City Council subsequent to the posting of the agenda for today's Council meeting.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Police Department, Fire Department, Department of Recreation and Parks, Bureau of Street Services, Department of Transportation, City Administrative Officer, and Chief Legislative Analyst be instructed, and the Mayor's Office and City Attorney be requested, to conduct an immediate *Venice Beach Public Safety Needs Assessment* and report its findings to the Public Safety Committee, the Arts, Parks, Health, Aging & River Committee, and the Venice Neighborhood Council within 14 days.

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ORIGINAL

I FURTHER MOVE that the *Venice Beach Public Safety Needs Assessment* examine ways to restrict and/or control non-essential vehicle access to the Venice Beach Boardwalk at each individual intersection from Venice Boulevard to the City of Santa Monica border, including an evaluation of the propriety of several safety measures, including, but not limited to:

- Retractable, removable, lockable posts or bollards that can restrict non-essential vehicular access, but still permit swift emergency access for first responders and City maintenance crews;
- Permanent bollards or other blockades at entry points not requiring emergency vehicle or maintenance access;
- Decorative elements that can serve as functional obstructions to vehicles, such as concrete planters or artwork;
- Improved signage, safety lighting, and/or painted directional guidance on the streets.

I FURTHER MOVE that the *Venice Beach Public Safety Needs Assessment* examine and evaluate recommendations from the Police and Fire Departments for elements to further enhance public safety, including, but not limited to:

- An emergency public address system for the Venice Beach Boardwalk;
- Enhanced or expanded closed circuit video equipment;
- Enhanced or improved street lighting.

I FURTHER MOVE that the CAO and CLA evaluate the costs associated for the new safety measures and identify funds to provide for them.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Police Department, in coordination with the Department of Transportation, immediately identify the most hazardous intersections for non-essential vehicular access, and direct the Department of Recreation & Parks and Bureau of Street Services to immediately install temporary bollards or barriers at those locations.

PRESENTED BY:


MIKE BONIN

Councilmember, 11th District

SECONDED BY:


MITCH O'FARRELL

Councilmember, 13th District

