

**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda date: June 15, 2009
Reviewed by: BP

Subject: Solano Stroll Permit and Financial Support

Report by: Ann Chaney, Community Development Director

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Direct staff to issue a no fee encroachment permit to the Solano Avenue Association for the 2009 Solano Stroll event, scheduled for Sunday, September 13, 2009 between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. (Event is 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.); and
2. Waive fees for paramedics to be on-site from 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., police overtime and city maintenance services.
3. Approve allocation of \$5,000 in financial support for the Solano Stroll.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The Solano Avenue Association (SAA) submitted a Street Event - Encroachment Permit request to the Community Development Department. According to the City's Master Fee Schedule, City Council approval is required for "group permits for special activities occurring in the public right-of-way (e.g., Solano Stroll)".

This year's event will be on September 13, 2009 and the encroachment permit would cover the time period of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and will extend along Solano Avenue from San Pablo Avenue east to the Berkeley border. As in years past, it is expected that the Executive Director, Allen Cain, will meet with Police and Community Development staff members to discuss any changes that might be anticipated for this year's event. This type of meeting is important to ensure that the City's maintenance crew and police department are adequately prepared.

Stroll organizers are to be commended for past policies of not allowing vendors to sell alcoholic beverages. As part of this encroachment permit, the Albany Police Department would like to reinforce this policy by requesting that Stroll organizers post signs (e.g., on barricades) reminding Stroll goers that "This is a non-alcohol event." In addition, Stroll organizers are encouraged to take steps to discourage public alcohol consumption. This would not apply to legitimate open air restaurants and cafes, whether located on private or public property. In essence, the consumption of alcohol should be discouraged in public spaces. Because no major changes are anticipated, staff is again recommending

that the City Council direct staff to issue a “no fee” encroachment permit for the 2009 Solano Stroll.

SAA is requesting a waiver for fees for paramedic service (from 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.), as well as police and city maintenance services during the event. These requests have been granted by the City Council in the past.

The SAA is also requesting a \$15,000 contribution from the City to assist in the Stroll and its service to the Albany community at large. Last year the City Council approved \$12,500 in funds to support the Solano Avenue Association, which included \$5,000 for the Solano Stroll and the remainder to support the Lunar New year celebration and other Solano Avenue activities. The allocation followed discussion about moving in the direction of financial support for specific events/activities rather than an overall subsidy for the business associations. Staff plans to return to Council with recommendations on allocations for specific events and activities other than the Stroll, in coordination with the Solano Avenue Association, as well as with the Albany Chamber of Commerce - which also received \$12,500 in financial support in fiscal year 2008-09. In the meantime, staff recommends the allocation of \$5,000 for the Solano Stroll.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

The Solano Stroll is often referred to as a mile long block party where the street is closed from San Pablo Avenue to The Alameda for virtually an entire day. The absence of motorized vehicles helps promote the concept of using alternative modes of travel and reduce carbon emissions to reach and enjoy commercial shopping areas. In addition, a number of exhibitors promote sustainable activities (e.g., recycling, water conservation, composting, creek restoration).

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The City provides a number of services to the Solano Stroll that include \$1,180 in fee waivers for paramedic services, \$7,450 for police overtime, and \$7,000 for maintenance services (\$6,000) and supplies (\$1,000). These costs are estimates. The encroachment permit fee for this street event is \$131.09 per the Master Fee Schedule. The allocation of \$5,000 in financial support for the Stroll is funded from the Non-Departmental General Fund Budget. Including the \$5,000 allocation, the value of the City’s estimated costs, fee waivers and financial support total \$20,761.09.

Attachments

1. Letter from Allen Cain, SAA Executive Director dated April 27, 2009
2. Solano Avenue Association Annual Program
3. Solano Street 2009 Encroachment Permit