

CAPISTRANO BAY DISTRICT
AGENDA REPORT
June 26, 2014

Security Reports

ITEM F.3

Proposal to Leave Vehicle Exit Gates Open During Busy Hours (Breeding)

Purpose: To extend the lifespan of the gate motors and decrease the resulting repair and maintenance costs by reducing the usage.

Replacement Cost: Approx. \$4600 per motor (includes labor)

The community exit gates get used twice as much as the two sets of gates for entering the community so it stands to reason that the exit gates would be the first ones needing eventual replacement.

The current motors are designed to move gates that weigh much more than ours. Our gates weigh in at about 400 lbs. each as compared to the gates at one of the Headlands private entrances that use the very same motors for gates weighing about 2000 lbs. During the design phase of the entry project the decision was made to oversize the motor capability so the motors could not be overworked and burn out prematurely.

There was a recent round of service calls to trouble-shoot some electronic problems with the exit gates (left side only). Fenceworks ultimately changed out the electronic circuit board that controls the left side motor. The contractor, Fenceworks, feels that the electronic problem was unrelated to any possible abuse since the motors are so oversized. Instead they think it was a random circuit board failure as the electronics are typically expected to last for 10 to 15 years.

While it's reasonable to assume that leaving the gates open for several hours each day can ultimately save the District by deferring maintenance expenses, there is a safety element to this proposal that should be carefully considered. During the warmer months there are many pedestrians, cyclists, joggers, skateboarders, etc. passing through the sidewalk exit portal every day.

From past observations by the various security officers at the gate, it is clear that when the gates are in the open position our pedestrians, cyclists, etc. walk directly through the exit on the driveway and not on the sidewalk. With the slight jog in the driveway there is an unavoidable blind spot on the left side beyond the gates as you approach the portal. A vehicle travelling at 15 to 20 mph may not have enough sight-distance reaction time to avoid hitting someone in the blind spot.

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In determining the driving behavior of vehicles exiting the community with the gates open, a single three-hour study was conducted on Friday, June 13th from 6:15 am to 9:00 am. Out of a total of 67 vehicles there were 10 that passed through at a dangerous speed:

- three at 15 to 19 mph
- two at 20 mph
- three at 21 to 24 mph
- two at 25 mph

*All speeds were clocked by our police officer on his radar gun

Fortunately, out of 7 pedestrians/cyclists using the exit that morning we only had one cyclist use the driveway. The reality, however, is that with school now out and more visitors to the community, the pedestrian/cyclist traffic will increase, thereby increasing the odds of an accident with the gates left open.

The Manager's recommendation is to leave the gates closed through the summer months for safety reasons and consider an off-season program that would allow for the gates to possibly be left open during a portion of the daylight hours during the winter months when homeowners are heading to work and construction workers are leaving in the afternoon to go home and our potential for pedestrians in the driveway is diminished.