



City of Maricopa

Legislation Text

File #: MISC 12-033, **Version:** 1

The Mayor and City Council shall discuss and possibly take action on allowing a continuation of the pilot program for City promotional banners, establishment of a process to allow City special event banners, or direct staff to revise the sign code to allow City promotional banners. Discussion and Action.

The City Council in March approved a pilot program using banners to promote the City-sponsored Salsa Festival. Citizens had suggested signs or banners were needed because too many residents were unaware of big events, even though the events were advertised in papers, newsletters, City channel, and on-line. Because many people commute to work outside the city, it is easy for them to miss information about City of Maricopa events.

Cities sponsor, run and promote large community festivals to bring people together and help to create a community identity. They also help residents meet their neighbors, gain knowledge about their city, which helps to create a stronger sense of community. These festivals also help business and organizations market themselves to residents.

As part of the approved pilot program, staff investigated use of large promotional banners to be viewed by commuters, and whether or not use of banners might be done before the Salsa Festival on March 31. The City of Maricopa has a Special Event Permit Process that allows for businesses and others to install banners promoting a special event for five days prior to the event, and limiting the banner to 32 square feet. (In addition, 24 hours prior to the event, directional signs are allowed as well.)

The City Council approved deviating from City rules to allow two large, special event banners promoting the Salsa Festival to be placed where commuters would be sure to see them. The pilot program tested the use of two 8x32-foot banners near northern entrance to City. (Staff had the approval of the HOAs as to locations.) In addition, the City installed smaller, 4x8-foot banners, at City facilities such as the fire stations, Pacana Park, and Library. Such banners are allowed under the rules of the existing sign code.

The large banners at the north end of the City seemed to work well for promoting the Salsa Festival. Attendance was higher than past years, and of those who were surveyed, half said they had learned of the event from the banners.

The issue which now faces the Council is the question of what to do next in regard to use of the large banners. The Council had previously discussed limiting the use of these banners to only the largest of the city-sponsored events, those that attract 5,000 participants or more. Staff assumes that this is still the desire of the Council and if so, the banners would be used to promote the Salsa Festival, the Great American Barbecue, Stage Coach Days, and any other major events sponsored by the City.

Council could choose to continue the pilot program and evaluate the issue after the Great American Barbecue. As an alternative, the Council could approve use of the two large banners as a regular part of the Special Event Process for the largest City-sponsored events (those that attract at least 5,000 participants). This would require staff to add the option of banners to the Special Event forms, which are reviewed by City Planning and Public Safety staff. Or, to be more formal about allowing the banners, the Council could direct staff to amend the City Sign ordinance to include the large banners.

The first two options are relatively simple and have no significant costs associated with them. Amending the

sign ordinance is a lengthier process and requires more staff time to accomplish. A text amendment to the Zoning Code requires a public hearing and when a public hearing is required a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) is required per Ordinance 07-01. This involves holding a neighborhood meeting and publishing the meeting dates in the local circulator (Maricopa Monitor). Once the citizen outreach is completed review by the Planning and Zoning is required for recommendation and final approval by City Council. This option can be completed within a 2-3 month time frame. Below is a draft timeline for this option.

- April 23 - P&Z Commission imitates the request of TXT12-01
- May 14- P&Z Review (Neighborhood meeting)
- May 15 - City Council (Discussion Only)
- May 28 - PUBLIC HEARING: P&Z (Discussion and Action)
- June 5 - PUBLIC HEARING: City Council (Discussion and Action)
- July 5 - Ordinance takes effect

Staff recommends that if Council desires to continue the use of the very large banners to promote city festivals, that the Council approve either continuing the pilot program, or direct staff to include use of the banners as a part of the Special Event process for large, city-sponsored events. An alternative, Council could direct staff to begin the process of amending the City sign code to allow such banners.