



Honorable Mayor and Members of the Hermosa Beach City Council

INFORMATIONAL REPORT ON THE COST EVALUATION AND STAFFING MODELS TO INCREASE PUBLIC SAFETY PRESENCE ON THE STRAND, BEACH, AND PARKS

Informational items are for discussion only. No action will be taken. A Council majority may request an action item to return at a future meeting.

(Police Chief Landon Phillips)

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends City Council receive an informational report on the cost evaluation and staffing models to increase public safety presence on the Strand, the beach, and City parks, and provide direction, if so desired.

Executive Summary:

As directed by City Council, staff presents this informational report containing four different options to boost the City of Hermosa Beach's public safety presence on the Strand, beach, and its parks. Options include overtime assignments to current personnel, utilizing contracted code enforcement officers, the appropriation of a Park Ranger position, and making no changes to its current operations. Support from a majority of Council would be needed for an action item to return at a future meeting.

Background:

The Hermosa Beach Strand is a heavily utilized public space shared by pedestrians, cyclists, skaters, and visitors throughout the year. An ongoing concern raised by residents involves the operation of electric bicycles (e-bikes), particularly complaints regarding speeding and reckless riding behavior that may pose safety risks to pedestrians.

Under the current Hermosa Beach Municipal Code 12.20.230, any wheeled equipment operated under electrical power is prohibited on the Strand, though they are permitted if operated solely by pedal power. This policy reflects a compromise intended to balance access and safety; however, it has also created practical enforcement challenges. Determining whether an e-bike is being powered electrically versus pedaled can be subjective, momentary, and difficult to clearly articulate, particularly in contested enforcement situations or administrative hearings.

The Hermosa Beach Police Department (HBPD) has addressed Strand-related issues through periodic enforcement operations and directed patrols, focusing on education, warnings, and selective citation. While these efforts have produced short-term compliance, maintaining constant patrol presence on the Strand is not an efficient use of sworn police resources, given broader citywide public-safety demands. Additionally, while resident complaints indicate quality-of-life and safety concerns, there is limited data supporting the need for daily or continuous enforcement on the Strand.

Past Council Actions

Meeting Date	Description
<u>October 28, 2025</u>	Informational Item requested by Councilmember Ray Jackson and Mayor Pro Tem Deto for assessment of cost, staffing, operational requirements for the Police Department to establish a more consistent and visible presence along the Strand, beach, and parks. Designated officers focused on visibility, proactive engagement, education, and enforcement in our most heavily used public spaces.
<u>December 9, 2025</u>	Informational Item requested by Mayor Rob Saemann and Councilmember Michael Keegan for discussion of contract officers as discussed at the Safety Forum.
<u>January 27, 2026</u>	Informational Item requested by Councilmember Dean Francois and Councilmember Michael Keegan Discussion of Police Department resources that have been devoted to safety on the Strand and plan for future allocation of these resources on the Strand.

Analysis:

As part of the regular weekly operations, the Police Department focuses enforcement efforts in impacted areas throughout the City based on crime and traffic collision data. In the last several years, the Police Department has done multiple directed enforcement operations focusing on e-bikes throughout the City, and at times on the Strand specifically.

In 2025, HBPD conducted 21 traffic enforcement operations. Twelve (12) of those operations were staffed by officers who were working their regular shift and/or overtime. Nine (9) of those operations were funded by Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) grants and officers worked on an overtime basis. During these operations, officers issued 267 citations, impounded 10 vehicles, and impounded 11 e-bikes. Eleven (11) of the total operations included e-bike enforcement which included enforcement on the Strand.

From January 1, 2026, through March 10, 2026, HBPD conducted 17 traffic enforcement operations. Seven (7) of those operations were staffed with officers who were working their regular shifts and four (4) of those operations had officers who were working overtime. Six (6) of these operations were funded by OTS grants and officers worked on

an overtime basis. Nine (9) of these operations were specific to e-bike enforcement on the Strand. During those 17 traffic enforcement operations, officers issued 167 citations and impounded 2 e-bikes. 105 of those citations were issued for bike and e-bike violations on the Strand.

HBPD has reviewed several enforcement options to address concerns raised by Councilmembers and the community. While there are concerns in public areas, such as the beach and parks, the emphasis is for enforcement on the Strand. As Police Officers and Community Service Officers (CSOs) are busy with regular duties throughout the city, it would be a disservice to redirect those resources to focus on the Strand and other public spaces.

In response, staff presents four different proposals, analyzing the benefits and drawbacks of each to help combat these concerns. The first option would be to utilize Hermosa Beach Police Officers and CSOs on an overtime basis to be dedicated to engagement, education and enforcement in public areas. A second option would be to hire contract Code Enforcement Officers who would be dedicated to assigned areas, with a specific objective. The third option would be for the City to authorize the appropriation of a Park Ranger position who would be dedicated to the Strand, beach, and parks. A Park Ranger would dedicate their time to these specific community concerns without taking other staff away from their regular duties. Option 4 would have HBPD continue to deploy resources based on crime and traffic collision data to areas with the greatest need. Enforcement of e-bikes would continue on the Strand and through the City with periodic enforcement operations.

Options for Council Consideration:

Option 1: Police Officers and Community Service Officers on an Overtime Basis

Pros

Effective Strand e-bike enforcement depends on professionalism, consistency, and accountability. While CSOs and sworn police officers differ in authority, both operate within the same organizational, policy, and accountability framework established by the Hermosa Beach Police Department (HBPD) and the City of Hermosa Beach. This shared foundation ensures enforcement efforts are uniform, transparent, consistent, and defensible.

Both CSOs and sworn police officers meet rigorous agency standards and operate as integrated members of the Police Department. Both positions are familiar with recurring Strand enforcement challenges, seasonal trends, congestion patterns, problem locations, and community expectations. All enforcement is conducted under HBPD policies and procedures, City of Hermosa Beach municipal codes, state law, and departmental supervision, certifying uniform application of enforcement standards.

CSOs and sworn police officers operate the same dispatch, radio, documentation, and tracking systems, allowing seamless coordination, and rapid escalation. Both groups utilize department-issued body-worn cameras (BWCs) and standardized reporting platforms to ensure transparency and evidentiary integrity. All personnel receive training in de-escalation, Fourth Amendment protections, and bias-based policing. All personnel hired by the City have completed an extensive background investigation, use department-issued equipment, and are managed by HBPD supervisors.

CSOs provide cost-effective, education-focused enforcement that preserves sworn staff for priority calls. CSOs have the authority to issue administrative citations when appropriate. When using sworn police officers, they have full enforcement authority, strong deterrence, and operational flexibility.

Cons

When using CSOs, they have limited authority in escalating encounters and need to rely on sworn officers for safety. When using sworn police officers, there is a higher cost, sustainability concerns, and a potential over-policing perception.

In addition, there is also a possibility of overtime fatigue for police officers and CSOs. Staffing extra enforcement on an overtime basis will be difficult to maintain over an extended period of time. To mitigate this fatigue, staff proposes a rotating, staggered overtime approach that can be shared by all personnel. Half of the shifts will be available to police officers, and the other half of the shifts will be available to CSOs. The days and hours of the overtime shifts will rotate to allow all police officers and CSOs to share the available overtime shifts.

Option 2: Contract Code Enforcement Officers

Pros

Using contract code enforcement officers (CEOs) has potential benefits to the City of Hermosa Beach. Contract CEOs would have a dedicated focus on Strand-related municipal violations without diverting police officers, CSOs, or existing City code enforcement staff. They would have the ability to issue Notices to Appear and administrative citations, including misdemeanor-level municipal code violations. Contract CEOs would conduct foot patrol on the Strand, beach, and park areas where vehicle access is limited. In addition, their presence increases visibility that may enhance voluntary compliance and education, particularly during peak usage periods.

Cons

The use of contract code enforcement services presents several important challenges and risks that would require careful evaluation. Contract CEOs have authority and enforcement limitations. They cannot conduct traffic stops and have limited mobility

compared to sworn police officers. Uncooperative or escalating situations would require police response, potentially reducing anticipated resource savings. Additionally, misdemeanor enforcement requires formal reporting through report writing systems such as Mark43. Access to these systems raises questions regarding permissions for other police department systems, CLETS (records and license checks) admission, evidence handling, and whether certain violations would escalate to Private-Persons Arrests (PPAs), including who would be considered the arresting officer or witness.

Utilizing contract CEOs would create challenges with training, supervision and consistency. Contract staff have varying levels of training, particularly related to Fourth Amendment considerations, civil rights, unlawful detentions, and avoiding selective or biased enforcement. Inconsistent staffing and turnover may result in different personnel rotating through the Strand, limiting continuity and institutional knowledge. Contract personnel may be unfamiliar with local community norms, expectations, and historical context, which can impact public interactions. Clear determination is needed regarding who provides day-to-day supervision and performance oversight.

There would be additional challenges with coordination and communication. Access to confidential law enforcement information, such as CLETS, will require additional training and clearance by contract enforcement personnel. Integration with existing dispatch and patrol operations would need to be defined, including whether contract staff would respond to calls for service or operate independently. Communication protocols between contract personnel and sworn staff would be essential to ensure safety and consistency.

There are concerns about liability, oversight and administrative impacts. The City would likely retain liability for enforcement actions, supervision, training adequacy, and civil rights compliance. Determination would be needed regarding:

- Managing court appearances and associated costs
- Overseeing complaints, use-of-force allegations, and human resources matters
- Determining if contract staff are fully subject to City and Police Department policies

Public records retention and disclosure obligations must be clearly addressed, including whether contract-generated records are retained by the City and subject to public records requests.

Implementation will require meet-and-confer discussions with applicable bargaining units. Meet-and-confer discussions can be a lengthy process and may take several months or more.

Option 3: Park Ranger

Pros

Creating a full-time Park Ranger position would provide the City of Hermosa Beach with a dedicated, specialized resource focused on public spaces including the Strand, beach, and City parks. Unlike contract personnel, a Park Ranger would be a City employee operating under HBPD's authority and assigned within the Community Services Division. This structure provides clear accountability, continuity, and alignment with City policies and enforcement standards.

A Park Ranger would retain enforcement authority pursuant to California Penal Code §832 and would be authorized to enforce Hermosa Beach Municipal Code (HBMC) violations. This authority provides clarity in enforcement actions and reduces many of the limitations associated with contract personnel. As a City employee, the Park Ranger would utilize established City systems for report writing and access to confidential law enforcement information. The Park Ranger would adhere to evidence handling protocols and comply with body-worn camera policies. With a dedicated focus on the Strand, beach, and park-related issues, the role would collaboratively work with other City departments to address quality-of-life concerns in public spaces. Over time, the position would build institutional knowledge and familiarity with the City and its expectations while providing consistent visibility and a stewardship presence in high-traffic recreational areas.

A Park Ranger position may enhance voluntary compliance through consistent engagement and education, while providing a structured enforcement option when necessary. As a specialized role, the position could focus on proactive problem-solving in high-use areas rather than periodic reactive enforcement operations.

Cons

The creation of a full-time Park Ranger position would require further fiscal and operational analysis prior to implementation. As a City employee, this position would involve salary, benefits, medical costs, training, equipment, uniforms, and potential vehicle expenses. These associated costs would require a long-term budget commitment given current budget constraints and exceed hourly contract staffing rates.

Unlike a model dedicated solely to the Strand, a Park Ranger would likely be responsible for multiple public spaces, including parks and beach areas. As a result, coverage would not be exclusive to the Strand and deployment priorities may shift based on seasonal demand or City needs.

As with any enforcement role, the City would retain responsibility for supervision, policy compliance, complaint investigation, use-of-force review, and public records retention. Clear operational guidelines would be necessary to ensure consistency and avoid duplication of duties with existing personnel.

Option 4: No Changes

Pros

Continuing current operations allows the Police Department to maintain a data-driven and flexible enforcement model. Resources can be directed to areas of greatest need based on crime trends, traffic collisions, seasonal demand, and community concerns, while preserving staffing for priority calls for service and other citywide policing responsibilities.

This option avoids additional personnel costs or long-term financial commitments associated with creating new positions or contracting services. Enforcement efforts can continue through periodic directed patrols and Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) grant-funded operations, allowing the City to leverage external funding when available.

HBPD already has established procedures, training, supervision, and reporting systems in place for traffic and e-bike enforcement. Officers are familiar with enforcement challenges on the Strand and can respond to concerns as they arise without implementing new programs or staffing models.

Cons

This approach does not provide a dedicated enforcement presence on the Strand or in other public spaces where community concerns are frequently raised. Enforcement efforts remain periodic rather than continuous, which may not meet expectations for consistent visibility.

Without dedicated staffing, enforcement activity must compete with other citywide priorities and calls for service, which may limit the ability to sustain focused Strand enforcement during peak periods. Additionally, the absence of a specialized resource may reduce opportunities for consistent education, engagement with the community, and proactive visibility with e-bike riders. Directed enforcement operations are effective but tend to be short-term rather than ongoing.

Maintaining current operations may also lead to continued community perception that the City is not doing enough to address e-bike concerns, even when enforcement activity is occurring.

Fiscal Impact:

For Option 1 and Option 2, staff recommends dedicating 32 hours per week. Option 3 would be a full-time position which would be 40 hours per week.

Option 1: Two Police Officers and Two CSO's (8 hours each) for 32 Hours per week

Option 1 would utilize 32 hours of overtime from \$103,876 to a maximum total estimated cost up to \$141,720. This would be comprised of 16 hours covered between two Police Officers. The other 16 hours would be covered between two CSOs. The 2 Police Officers and 2 CSO's would work 8 hours each, twice per week for a total of 32 hours per week.

The minimum and maximum estimated cost would increase from \$106,996 to \$145,970 for the upcoming 2026-27 Fiscal Year due to the updated salary schedules effective July 2026.

The minimum and maximum total estimated cost is based on assuming a Police Officer to Police Sergeant and CSO from the bottom of the salary range to the top of the salary range for a more conservative estimate. The total estimated cost includes City employer payroll tax expenditures, however actual costs is anticipated to be lower than the maximum since it is unlikely that personnel at the top of the salary range will fill every overtime assignment.

Advantages of Option 1 is it leverages existing trained personnel and equipment, eliminating startup costs and service delays. however it does not create long-term liabilities such as pension or healthcare obligations.

Additionally, overtime provides budget flexibility, allowing staffing levels to be adjusted based on seasonal demand and workforce availability.

Option 2: Two Contract Code Enforcement Officers (CEO's) for 32 Hours per week
The Contract CEO's hourly cost annualized is estimated to be \$133,120.

However, the annualized cost does not include other potential contract costs such as potential additional equipment, vehicle, and technology expenses that narrows the overall savings.

Option 3: Additional full-time Park Ranger to be budgeted for 40 hours per week
Creating an additional full-time permanent Park Ranger position is estimated to cost \$131,620 comprised of an estimated annual salary of \$93,204 and benefits of \$38,416.

This annualized estimate is based on using the median salary (between Step 3 and Step 4) of the neighboring City of Manhattan Beach's Salary Schedule of the Parks Services Enforcement Officer (Park Ranger). Costs are expected to increase with ongoing salary growth, benefits, and pension obligations that extend well beyond the initial year.

Other anticipated personnel outfitting costs may include the purchase of portable radios and radio system access, body-worn camera hardware and licensing, specialty equipment, and a beach-capable vehicle to operate on the sand. The outfitting costs is estimated to be \$65,248.

Option 4: No changes

No changes would have no fiscal impact since it would utilize the current Police Department operational budget for public safety presence.

Options Cost Analysis			
Category	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Staffing Model	Overtime of 2 Police Officers + 2 CSO's	Contract for 2 CEO's	Add Park Ranger Position
Hours per Week	32 hours	32 hours	40 hours
Direct Labor Costs	\$103,876 - \$141,720	\$133,120	\$93,204
Benefits	Included	None	\$38,416
Total Labor Costs	\$103,876 - \$141,720	\$133,120	\$131,620
Outfitting Costs (Tactical Gear, Body Worn Camera and Vehicle)	Not Applicable	TBD (Potentially Additional)	\$65,248
Total Estimated Annual Costs	\$103,876 - \$141,720	\$133,120	\$196,868
*Option 4 not presented due to no fiscal impact.			

Recommendation:

If Council desires to bring back an action item at a future meeting, Staff recommends Option 1: utilizing Police Officers and CSOs on an overtime basis for additional presence, education and enforcement in public spaces, with an emphasis on the Strand. Shifts would rotate among Police Officers and CSOs and vary in days and hours to reduce overtime fatigue and promote equitable scheduling.

A tiered model ensures effective, sustainable enforcement aligned with community expectations. Staff recommends implementing Option 1 for a period of six (6) months to assess if this approach would improve safety and address community concerns.

Since February 2026, HBPD has already assigned dedicated police officers and CSOs to enforce regulations on bikes and e-bikes on the Strand on an overtime basis (Option 1). This was a direct response to growing community demand for more enforcement on the Strand. Adjustments were made by HBPD to allow for additional Strand enforcement.

In addition, staff would conduct a pre-survey to measure how the community feels about safety on the Strand and concerns of e-bikes. After the six (6) month period, staff would conduct a post-survey to measure any changes from the community. Staff would then return to City Council to discuss any findings and seek further direction.

Respectfully Submitted by: Joanne Loeza, Management Analyst

Concur: Eric Cahalan, Police Captain

Concur: Landon Phillips, Police Chief

Noted for Fiscal Impact: Henry Chao, Finance Manager

Reviewed by: Brandon Walker, Administrative Services Director

Approved: Steve Napolitano, City Manager