

18. CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS AND STREET BANNERS

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The purpose of this report is to meet a request of the Board to provide advice on available sites/poles for Christmas banners, in the Spreydon/Heathcote area.

DESCRIPTION

Christmas decorations are hung in the central city and suburbs each year between mid-November and early January. While the central city decorations are fitted in a variety of ways, including being hung from buildings, sited on veranda tops and hung from street light poles; the suburban decorations, to date, have usually been street banners hung from existing banner poles.

Banner sites are well spread across the central city and in some suburban areas. To manage the costs associated with producing and fitting banners on a regular basis, it is necessary to maintain the suburban banner sites as Christmas or special banner sites only.

The objective of the banner programme is to:

- (a) Contribute to the colour and vitality of the city;
- (b) Identify and enhance key approaches to the city;
- (c) Provide a series of high profile, permanent promotional sites to collectively promote some of the special public features and celebrations of our city.

Banners are used for promotional purposes, not advertising purposes. They generate a sense of pride in an area. For that reason we have always chosen to put the banners into areas that are aesthetically pleasing, well visited and high profile. To draw attention by banners to areas that are not aesthetically pleasing creates other potential problems for landlords and the Council.

COSTS OF INSTALLATION OF NEW BANNER SITES

The cost of installing new sites on existing poles is based on \$1,048 per four sites. This cost is based on the assumption that existing poles are made of concrete and therefore suitable for banners in their weight-bearing capacity. In comparison, the cost of installing new 'pivot arm' poles (similar to those on the corner of Gasson Street and Moorhouse Avenue) for banners is \$5,530.

Banner change costs for four sites is \$200 per double change. Banners in most sites have to be changed a minimum of three times a year to ensure they are clean and presentable. The cost for banners, while it varies dependant on the colour, design and size, is approximately \$556 per four sites.

Poles and banners have been quoted in groups of four because to do any less than four banners in an area is an insignificant display.

There are a number of regulations around the erecting of new poles on either Council land or Transit New Zealand land, where permission is required and in some cases resource consent. Additional permissions and traffic management plans are also required for the change outs, under health and safety requirements.

The City Promotions budget is committed to existing banner sites and a conscious effort has been made not to install additional sites because of the on-going maintenance costs.

EXISTING SITES IN SPREYDON/HEATHCOTE AREA

Christmas banners/decorations are hung each year on five banner sites at the Beckenham shops, 15 banner sites along Lincoln Road at Addington Village, and 15 banner sites in Sydenham, making a total of 35 sites, valued at \$9,170 of hardware collectively, with additional potential annual maintenance costs of \$2,231 per year.

The sites in Sydenham and six of the Lincoln Road sites have been integrated into the general banner programme, meaning they fly banners all year round. Unfortunately, due to banner annual maintenance costs, the City Promotion budget is unable to guarantee banners on the other sites throughout the year.

Banners site are now not provided in residential areas because the flapping of the banners in the wind generates substantial noise levels and irritates residents. In the past some banners have been moved from some sites because of this problem.

MAINTAINING THE BANNER SITES

Fitting Banners

There are important health and safety requirements to be considered in the fitting process of banners. It is necessary that an approved supplier fit the banners. To carry out the process requires a cherry picker and due to the siting of many of the banners on streets, it is necessary to carry out the process during the night to minimise traffic issues. Any service provider operating on banner poles alongside roadways must have a Traffic Management Plan approved and must have a Health and Safety Management Plan. Approved adequate lighting and signage must be used to identify the work under action.

The cost of banner fittings is labour driven with the need to maintain banding as and when required. The fitting of the banners is an expensive phase of the programme. The City Promotions budget does not meet the costs of fitting banners owned by outside groups.

Banner Design and Structure

A series of guidelines have been developed to assist in the design and manufacturing of banners. This information has not been included in this report as any Christmas banners would be part of a greater Christmas programme for the city.

POTENTIAL NEW SITE IN SPREYDON/HEATHCOTE AREA

There are four concrete light poles in the Selwyn Street shopping area that could have Christmas banners attached.

The cost associated with the development of this site for Christmas banners is \$1,804 (as detailed above). The Christmas banners would be on show for a period of six weeks. While the site is a good suburban site in terms of existing poles, no discussions have been held with the retailers in the area as to whether they are interested in having banners in their area. Permission from Transport and City Streets Unit is required for the use of the street light poles and this would need to be obtained before the works were undertaken.

The City Promotions budget does not have funding to assist with the development of the site, nor the maintenance of banners for the site.

SUMMARY

The Street Banner Programme is an effective way to develop a sense of pride and communicate promotional messages to residents and visitors to the city. Banner sites across the city are well spread to maximise the effect of the banners and to ensure colour and vitality during specific seasons and celebrations. The spread includes central city and suburban sites.

The costs of maintenance of the banner programme are high and the development of new sites will add to these annual costs. It is not appropriate to develop additional new sites unless they form an integral part of a specific new project and budget provision can be made for installation of the sites as well as on-going maintenance costs. The City Promotion budget is totally committed to maintaining existing sites.

The success of street banners as a visual attraction for the city is borne from the fact that the banner sites are promotional sites, not advertising sites. To maintain this feature, it is necessary to have a centrally co-ordinated approach to the location and design of all banners that are hung from the Council owned banner sites.

Staff

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Board not commit to the development of new banner sites in the Spreydon/Heathcote area due to the on-going costs of maintenance.
 2. That no city promotional funding be allocated to new suburban Christmas banner sites.

Chairman's

- Recommendation:** That, given the cost of maintenance of the banners, the Board advocate for special funding for enhancement of these areas, including pavers.