



Source: Public Works

Agenda Item No: REP 127-12

To: City Council
From: City Manager and Staff

Council Meeting Date: Aug 20, 2012

Re: "Children at Play" Signs (CM 3648 & CM 3677)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff has prepared for Council consideration a report concerning "Children at Play" signs.

DISCUSSION:

At the June 18, 2012 Council meeting, staff was asked to look into the feasibility of adding a "Children at Play" sign to the intersection of 6th Street and Hirth. In addition, on July 18, 2012, Council requested a "Slow Children" sign be installed at the north end of Garden Drive near the duplexes at the end of the street.

"Children at Play" and, "Slow Children" signs are frequently requested by citizens. The pros and cons of posting these signs has received much discussion. Columbia uses the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices to evaluate the installation of signs. The following points are useful in considering the intended purpose of these signs:

- * Warning signs are intended to advise motorists of an unusual or unexpected condition ahead. "Children at Play" signs give no instruction to the motorist. Children playing in a residential area is a normal, expected condition and thus the sign will provide no information or safety benefit.
- * Warning signs are most effective when used sparingly. Since children live on nearly every residential block, there would have to be signs on each street. Blocks with no signs could have the effect of suggesting no children live in that neighborhood.
- * The presence of a residential area is ample warning for prudent drivers to exercise caution. In the case of a less prudent driver, it is unlikely a sign will be as useful as parental supervision in safeguarding children.
- * If signs encourage parents and children to believe they have an added degree of protection, which the signs do not and cannot provide, a great disservice results as some parents may consider allowing children to play in the streets. Children should be taught to play safely, away from streets, and safely cross streets.
- * Specific warning signs for deaf and/or blind children, schools, parks, and cross walks are available for use where indicated by policy. If there are safety concerns with other roadway features such as a curve, hill, or lack of sidewalks, a traffic safety investigation can be conducted, to verify and possibly mitigate these concerns.

For the above reasons, Columbia does not install, "Children at Play" or, "Slow Children" signs.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact with this report.

VISION IMPACT:

<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Meetings/visionimpact.php>

Columbia will enjoy a safe, interconnected, non motorized transportation network. It will be culturally supported by the citizens as it will encourage social interaction and healthy lifestyles. The roadway, sidewalk, public transit, and trail systems will all tie together into an effective integrated transportation network.

SUGGESTED COUNCIL ACTIONS:

For information only.

FISCAL and VISION NOTES:					
City Fiscal Impact Enter all that apply		Program Impact		Mandates	
City's current net FY cost	\$0.00	New Program/ Agency?	No	Federal or State mandated?	No
Amount of funds already appropriated	\$0.00	Duplicates/Epands an existing program?	No	Vision Implementation impact	
Amount of budget amendment needed	\$0.00	Fiscal Impact on any local political subdivision?	No	Enter all that apply: Refer to Web site	
Estimated 2 year net costs:		Resources Required		Vision Impact?	Yes
One Time		Requires add'l FTE Personnel?	No	Primary Vision, Strategy and/or Goal Item #	13.1
Operating/ Ongoing		Requires add'l facilities?	No	Secondary Vision, Strategy and/or Goal Item #	
		Requires add'l capital equipment?	No	Fiscal year implementation Task #	