

Hitchhiking

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S.C. City Council Faces Youth Turnout

Confrontation Over Hitchhiking



A major confrontation looms at Tuesday's Santa Cruz City Council meeting over the city's proposed hitchhiking ordinance.

An unsigned leaflet distributed in Santa Cruz Friday urges a massive turnout of young people to argue against the proposal: "When they bust you on the street it will be too late. Individual action can't prevent this attack on our people; only the power of the people can. We've got to get it together because we can't get it separately."

The leaflet accuses the city of proposing the ordinance in order to rid Santa Cruz of young transients by outlawing hitchhiking, which is "part of our culture, the culture of life."

No decision on an ordinance is slated at the council meeting, which will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers.

City Manager Dave Koester said the city attorney merely will present a report on the feasibility of enacting a no-hitchhiking ordinance.

Some officials had voiced the opinion the law wouldn't be enforceable because the state has pre-empted enforcement in that field. But Donald Haile of the city attorney's office said his preliminary investigation indicates the state has not taken over the law in that area.

He added state law does prohibit hitchhiking in roadways, which would take in an area from curb to curb.

But the law doesn't cover hitching from sidewalks and roadsides, in Haile's opinion.

Mayor Ernest Wicklund has talked of appointing a committee to investigate further the formation of a no-hitching law, and the group may be appointed at the Tuesday meeting.

Maybe they're coming to Tuesday's council meeting on the no-hitchhiking ordinance, or maybe not. At any rate, a leaflet given to young people last week urges them to show up before the Santa Cruz City Council and protest consideration of the law, which some say would be aimed against the hippie way of life.