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# WAVING GOODBYE? HANFORD CONSIDERS NEW RULES ON BUSINESS FEATHER FLAGS



By [Francisco Ramirez](#)

## Hanford Council Weighs New Rules for Feather Flags to Balance Business Needs and Public Safety

*HANFORD, Calif. (July 14, 2025)* — The Hanford City Council is set to discuss a proposal that could reshape how businesses advertise using feather flags, as part of the regular meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 15, 2025. The item, listed under General Business on the meeting agenda, [aims to explore potential amendments to the city's](#) sign ordinance that currently prohibits feather flags altogether.

Feather flags, also known as feather banners, are tall, vertical fabric signs mounted on flexible poles that often line the front of businesses looking to draw attention. While visually effective, they have sparked increasing concern in cities across [California](#) due to safety, maintenance, and visual clutter issues.

According to the City of [Hanford's](#) agenda packet, the proposed ordinance framework would allow feather flags in designated non-residential zones such as commercial and industrial districts, but with clear and enforceable limits. No permit would be required as long as [businesses comply with the regulations](#).

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## Key elements of the proposed ordinance include:

- **Placement and Zoning:** Feather flags would only be permitted on private property in commercial, office, and industrial zones. They would be strictly prohibited in residential areas and potentially limited in the Mixed Use–Downtown (MX-D) zone.
- **Size and Quantity:** Businesses would be limited to one flag per 60 feet of street frontage. Each flag could stand no taller than 10 feet and cover no more than 16 square feet in area.
- **Display Restrictions:** Flags could only be displayed during [business hours](#), with an additional 30-minute window before opening and after closing. All flags would need to be taken down when the business is closed.
- **Safety and Accessibility Requirements:** Flags must maintain a 7-foot setback from any curb or edge of pavement and must not block sidewalks, parking stalls, driveways, or pedestrian paths. A minimum of 4 feet of unobstructed sidewalk space must be maintained at all times.
- **Construction Standards:** Only professionally constructed, durable, and weather-resistant materials such as vinyl or polyester would be permitted. Businesses would be required to remove flags during high-wind conditions to prevent hazards.

The push to consider changes to the ordinance comes [amid concerns voiced by local business owners](#) seeking better visibility in high-traffic areas. However, city staff noted in the packet that many municipalities which previously allowed feather flags without strict regulation have since reversed course due to recurring problems.

## Lessons from Other Cities

Several California cities have documented issues with unregulated or excessive feather flags. Over time, these flags can become worn, faded, or torn, contributing to a neglected



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appearance in commercial corridors. Some cities have also dealt with complaints about sidewalk obstructions, visual distractions for drivers, and even loose flags being blown into roads or pedestrian zones.

Unrestricted flag usage has been linked to enforcement challenges, inconsistent business compliance, and an overall decline in visual standards in downtown and gateway areas. By introducing clear and consistent standards, Hanford aims to avoid these pitfalls while still supporting local [business](#) visibility.

## No Immediate Action Planned

Tuesday's meeting will focus on review and discussion only. No ordinance will be adopted at this time. Based on Council direction, city staff may be tasked with drafting formal amendments to the sign ordinance for a future vote.

The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Hanford [City Council](#) Chambers, located at 400 N. [Douty Street](#). It will also be livestreamed on the city's official website at <http://livestream.hanford.city>.