



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: 4/18/2011

AGENDA OF: 4/26/2011

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

SUBJECT: Citywide Wayfinding Project. (ED)

RECOMMENDATION: Motion to accept the wayfinding report and authorize the Executive Director to move forward with RFP release and award of contract(s) for design of first priority projects.

BACKGROUND: Tourism is a major economic engine in Santa Cruz, and being able to easily navigate is critical to a positive visitor experience. In February 2010 the City of Santa Cruz Redevelopment Agency launched a citywide wayfinding effort to evaluate and improve upon the experience of navigating around Santa Cruz.

More than 20 firms responded to an RFP for phase one analysis. The consultant team of MERJE Design, Lance Wyman, Timerie Gordon and Rick Engineering was engaged in May 2010 to complete an evaluation of existing conditions and strategy and prioritized recommendations for improvements. Previous wayfinding clients include the cities of San Diego, Santa Fe, Miami Beach, the State of New Jersey, the American Museum of Natural History and the Mexico City Metro System.

The consultant team analyzed City plans, toured the City with representatives from the Police Department, UCSC and other stakeholders, and completed an onsite inventory of current wayfinding signage. The team also analyzed current signage in context with new federal and state wayfinding signage guidelines. An initial Steering Committee meeting followed by two full days of stakeholder meetings was held in July 2010. Follow-up stakeholder and Steering Committee presentations were held October 27th. A number of members of the public who expressed interest in the project were brought into the stakeholder group for the October meeting, and subsequently included in stakeholder communications.

A draft report was circulated to the Steering Committee and stakeholders in early March 2011 and feedback has been synthesized into the report submitted today. The report is also available online at <http://bit.ly/sc-wayfinding-report>.

DISCUSSION: The report considers the variety of tools that users may encounter as they navigate to and through Santa Cruz, and recommends an overarching goal of decreasing visual clutter while communicating clear, friendly and integrated messaging on multiple platforms, including web, phone, signage and print materials. Achieving this goal will require continued and ongoing leadership in a complex environment of multiple stakeholder interests and evolving navigational platforms. First priority projects recommended to be initiated include the following:

- Update highway signage
- Update parking and vehicular directional signage programs
- Develop pedestrian signage between the Downtown and Beach Area
- Develop bicycle signage for the West Cliff and San Lorenzo River Levee loops
- Update and expand banner program to include district banners
- Develop orientation and online map, and hotel staff training
- Develop primary gateways into Santa Cruz (Ocean Street and Mission Street)

Unique approaches will be required for different projects, however the partnerships developed in the first phase of this project with stakeholders and the Steering Committee will provide a key foundation for implementation. Staff recommends that the Agency Board accept the wayfinding report and authorize the Executive Director to move forward with RFP release and contract award(s) for the design of first priority projects.

Second priority projects include projects currently in progress and led by private partners, and projects that are supportive but not integral to the overall functional goal. These include the tourist shuttle, EV and zipcar signage, expansion of the pedestrian signage program and supporting the CVC's development of a Santa Cruz smart phone app. Staff recommends the City pursue these based on available budget and partnership opportunities.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funds have been allocated for implementation of first priority projects in the FY2011 and FY2012 Redevelopment Agency Budgets. Initial design contracts are estimated to cost up to \$200,000. Total cost including design, fabrication and installation of priority projects is estimated at \$1,453,000. Staff will bring future contracts related to fabrication and installation to the Agency Board for approval prior to implementation. There is no impact to the General Fund by moving forward with the initial design contract(s).

Prepared by:	Submitted by:	Approved by:
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ATTACHMENTS: None.