



Memorandum

TO: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Blage Zelalich
Jessica Zenk

SUBJECT: DOWNTOWN WAYFINDING
PROGRAM UPDATE

DATE: February 11, 2019

Approved	/s/	Date	2/15/19
	Kim Walesh		

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 3

RECOMMENDATION

Accept Downtown Wayfinding Program and Regional Transit Mapping and Wayfinding updates, which provide a status report of activities undertaken for a permanent wayfinding system for Downtown San José.

BACKGROUND

Downtown San José is home to more than 200 dining, retail, and entertainment venues in a very walkable setting at the hub of the Valley's transit network. Unfortunately, trying to find your way around Downtown can be challenging, particularly for a new or infrequent visitor because:

- Downtown has multiple distinct subareas and districts with varying levels of activity and identity.
- “Dead blocks” – stretches of parking lots, vacant units, underutilized lots, or blank walls – frequently separate subareas and keep people from exploring.
- Existing wayfinding measures are primarily auto-oriented, directing drivers to parking lots or to freeways.
- Signage that may be relevant to pedestrians is not pedestrian-scale or predictable.

Staff has been working with local partners to advance wayfinding for San José, as well as regional partners to collaboratively develop a regional wayfinding program and transit map. The remainder of this memorandum provides status reports for these wayfinding efforts.

As reported previously to the Community and Economic Development Committee, these efforts have produced a [Wayfinding Program Development Final Report](#), funded by the Knight Foundation, which laid out a path for scoping and implementing a comprehensive wayfinding program; a digital “base map” with critical information about the Greater Downtown; an

interactive online and print [map](#) of the Downtown, which has been used daily and for special events; and a regional partnership to implement the recommended system beginning this year.

Most recently, in April 2018, City Council accepted a report on the Downtown Wayfinding System, which included findings and recommendations for a wayfinding program for Downtown San José and a commitment to collaborate with the work of the Regional Mapping and Wayfinding Partnership, led by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). Additionally, Council authorized the City Manager to negotiate and execute a Master Consulting Agreement with City ID LLC for wayfinding and placemaking design services for an initial three-year term ending June 2021 for an aggregate maximum compensation not to exceed \$2,000,000, subject to the appropriation of funds. The City has budgeted \$850,000 for work through this agreement, \$550,000 for design services by City ID and \$200,000 to fabricate and install the initial totem signs by a vendor to be secured through a separate procurement process.

ANALYSIS

With new development, an emphasis on urban placemaking, activation of parks and plazas, investment in bicycle and transit infrastructure, an increase in conventions, and the recruitment of national and international sporting events, San José needs a wayfinding program that helps people navigate its urban core and encourages them to explore Downtown amenities.

San José's new wayfinding system focuses on pedestrian and non-auto travel and employs user-centric design. The wayfinding system will be accessible through multiple channels (digital, print, signs). It is designed to complement other efforts – for example, enhanced urban design, new transit infrastructure – that help people navigate the city.

The wayfinding system will be modular and extendible – it will grow over time with diverse but integrated wayfinding products and funding. The City is working smarter by sharing implementation resources with partners such as MTC, the San Jose Downtown Association, Team San Jose, San Jose State University, VTA, and other Bay Area jurisdictions. This process is designed to achieve economies of scale and will be delivered in phases, as resources are available and opportunities arise.

Downtown Wayfinding Program Update: Design and Deployment of Initial Totems

In May 2018, staff and City ID began to develop digitally based maps, information, and product design standards for San Jose's local wayfinding system. This work built on the previously developed Downtown maps and was the first time that industrial designers began to design initial structures – totems to display maps and wayfinding information.

City ID held stakeholder workshops and conducted site visit research and observations in July, October, and November. Based on the data gathered, City ID recommends that San Jose's local wayfinding system ultimately includes four types of totems - Arrival, Navigation, Hotspot and

Route. The first phase of the program will focus on delivering a static, potentially illuminated, Navigation totem. This type of signage will be deployed at key intersections and is designed to help a user orientate themselves and then plan and navigate their route to an intended destination. The totem information will contain a downtown district and landmark map, combined with a ten-minute walk map that highlights specific types of street-level activity to help pedestrians explore. A mock-up of the Navigation totem was deployed in front of the convention center during the NHL All-Star weekend festivities the last weekend in January. City ID is compiling and analyzing the feedback received on the mock-up totem and will provide this information at the February Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

The first deployment of wayfinding totems is proposed to be along San Carlos Street, between the McEnery Convention Center and San Jose State University. This corridor was selected because the convention center consistently hosts large events with thousands of attendees, yet these attendees do not seem to venture out to Downtown's SoFA District, just two blocks away. Similarly, San Jose State students often do not explore beyond Second Street into the SoFA District. San Jose State has expressed an interest in partnering with the City to develop a wayfinding system to help students fully integrate into Downtown and assist visitors in finding their way to and around campus. The recently built Student Union contains conference space that Team San Jose is utilizing as overflow for larger conventions and conferences such as Nvidia's GPU Tech Conference in March. Staff and consultants will evaluate the impact of the pilot with quantitative and qualitative data regarding trips by students and visitors.

The second pilot area identified for early wayfinding totem investment is SAP Center and Diridon Station to San Pedro Square and the North San Pedro area to St. James Park. These venues draw hundreds of thousands of different types of visitors, but Highway 87 and other gaps in the urban fabric hamper pedestrian connections in and between these areas. This project will primarily consist of pedestrian-scale totems funded under the Bassett Street Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities grant, which includes \$200,000 for wayfinding. The project will leverage more substantial arrival and destination totems included in the MTC's Regional Mapping and Wayfinding pilot described below.

Additional Wayfinding Products

As mentioned previously, City ID recommends that the City deploy several wayfinding product types over phases. After the initial pilot program, they recommend investments in Arrival, Hotspot and Route totems. The Arrival totem would be a planning-based product, located at origin sites such as Diridon Station and the convention center and would help the user to establish their overall orientation and travel plan. The Hotspot totem will contain information about specific areas or sub districts such as San Pedro Square or the SoFA District. Route totems will be designed for wayfinding along corridors like trails and major bikeways. Navigation and Route products will be static and illuminated while Arrival and Hotspot products will offer active and interactive options. Active and interactive product types involve complex technologies that require additional design and more robust system requirements to function properly.

Over the years, including recently, media companies, telecommunications companies and kiosk vendors have approached the City wishing to put interactive digital kiosks in the Downtown public right of way. These kiosks typically include a substantial amount of private advertising or sponsorships and they often include the opportunity to integrate information from city government and other conduit providers. In exchange for use of the public right of way and rights to advertise, the commercial kiosk vendors typically offer free community benefits that include public Wi-Fi, USB device charging stations, 311/611/911 public assistance, and municipal dark fiber. Some preparatory environmental work is underway (Council Policy Priority #6: Electronic Billboards) that could open the door for consideration of interactive kiosks with commercial advertising in the public right of way, along with other street furniture with advertising. This environmental work is scheduled to be completed in early 2020, with the necessary Planning Commission and City Council hearings in Spring of 2020.

Aside from the year-long environmental clearance process, a number of issues would need to be addressed before the City could move forward with the implementation of a commercial digital kiosk program. Some of these issues include:

Creating the appropriate regulatory framework - While existing Council Policy 1-7 allows for sponsorships, there is no existing City policy that allows commercial advertising in the right-of-way.

Identifying the proper procurement process - As previously stated, multiple companies have approached the City advocating for advertising-based kiosk solutions. If the City decides to pursue this, a fair procurement process would need to be identified.

Determining the potential for revenue - Securing the ability to advertise in the public right of way is potentially a lucrative opportunity for the selected company. The City would need to ensure that it secures the appropriate value in revenue or services in exchange for allowing commercial kiosks in the public right of way.

Clarifying third-party participation - The City has been approached about the possibility of assigning the ability to place interactive kiosks in the public right of way to a third party entity. Staff would need clarification whether or how the City could authorize another entity to implement a wayfinding kiosk program in the public right of way.

Properly integrating privacy/data/Smart City initiatives - The City will need to incorporate emerging Privacy Principles and Privacy Policy work into a kiosk program and develop a consistent approach to the funding and placement of connected devices on the public right of way to support economic development, digital inclusion and smart cities initiatives while protecting the City's investment in pavement and sidewalks.

Ensuring an integrated approach – It would be imperative to coordinate and integrate Downtown's local wayfinding system with potential interactive commercial kiosks as well as any other proposed street furniture such as benches or newspaper condominiums. Other cities that have gone down this path have experienced "clutter creep" on sidewalks due to lack of a holistic approach.

Next Steps

Immediate next steps for the Downtown Wayfinding Program include:

- Refined design of the cartographic base and identity elements unique to San Jose (March–May 2019)
- Procurement for fabrication of single totem prototype including unit costs and schedule for delivery (May 2019)
- Stakeholder workshop (May 2019)
- Prototype evaluation, final feedback and product design (June 2019)
- Procurement process for full pilot delivery and options for expansion (Starting late Summer 2019)

Regional Transit Mapping and Wayfinding Project Update

On January 11, 2019, MTC staff released a prototype, print-ready, regional transit map (Exhibit A) showing an overview of all principal transit modes in the Bay Area. This was the culmination of an 18-month process which also included stakeholder interviews and workshops with Bay Area cities and transit operators. The map is a combined effort of 28 transit agencies, the MTC, SPUR and consultant City ID and is intended to provide a sense of the region's overall transit network. At the January meeting, the MTC Operations Committee also approved the allocation of \$950,000 in new funding to develop and install a prototype suite of maps and arrival and destination totems in San Francisco, Oakland, Santa Rosa and San José's Diridon Station and Downtown, as described above. This second phase of work will develop a network brand (including product form and size, map scales, colors, pictograms, illustrations, textures, etc.) and will include testing with Bay Area transit riders in late 2019.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The local and regional wayfinding programs contain explicit evaluation provisions. The results of those evaluations and an update about both programs will continue to be shared with the Community and Economic Development Committee annually at the February Committee meeting.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the City's website for the February 25, 2019 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

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COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

/s/
BLAGE ZELALICH
Downtown Manager
Office of Economic Development

/s/
JESSICA ZENK
Acting Deputy Director
Department of Transportation

For questions please contact Sal Alvarez in the Office of Economic Development at (408) 793-6943.

Exhibit A

Prototype Regional Transit Map



Please note: due to variations in printers, intended colors may not be accurately represented.