

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: February 27, 2025

PREPARED BY: Randy Chavez, Deputy Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: CITYWIDE WAYFINDING AND ENTRY MONUMENT SIGNAGE
(PROJECT NO. MST00003)

RECOMMENDATION:

Provide feedback on the designs for the citywide wayfinding and entry monument signage.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Background

In March 2023, the City Council held a study session to evaluate citywide wayfinding and entry monument signage. Wayfinding signage includes approximately 76 existing directional signs distributed throughout Palm Desert, originally approved in March 2008. Entry monument signs refer to more prominent signage installed at five locations, serving as landmarks at the City's gateways to welcome visitors and reinforcing Palm Desert's identity. The presentation can be found as Attachment 1.

During a previous study session, the City Council provided feedback to staff regarding both types of signage. First, the City Council requested that staff develop a new wayfinding master plan (Plan) for consideration. Second, they directed staff to design three entry monument signs, including two replacements at existing locations and one at a new location, as identified below:

- Washington Street and Fred Waring Drive (replace)
- Monterey Avenue and Dinah Shore Drive (replace)
- Cook Street and Dinah Shore Drive / Interstate 10 (new)

Request for Proposal

In November 2023, the City issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to design the Wayfinding Master Plan (Project ID: 2023-RFP-221) and received seven proposals. In January 2024, the City executed an agreement with Selbert Perkins Design (Consultant) to develop the Plan to replace the existing system. The agreement can be found as Attachment 2.

In January 2024, the City issued an RFP for the design of new entry monument signs (Project ID: 2023-RFP-223), receiving five proposals. Initially, the City considered the potential benefits of issuing separate RFPs for wayfinding and entry monument signage. However, selecting the same consultant for both projects proved to be the more practical choice with ensuring greater design consistency. Therefore, the City executed an additional agreement with the Consultant in March 2024. The agreement can be found as Attachment 3.

Community Survey: Initial Feedback

In March 2024, the City conducted a community survey to gather feedback regarding the existing wayfinding system. The City received 73 responses. The survey results displayed that 71% of respondents found the current wayfinding signage useful, highlighting its clear visibility, helpful directional guidance, and alignment with key destinations. However, 29% indicated concerns, citing issues with readability, lack of signage for certain areas, and the need for improved district identification. The results can be found as Attachment 4.

Active Transportation Program Subcommittee: Initial Design Concepts

Taking into consideration City Council and community feedback, the City and Consultant have undergone a thorough review and design process, resulting in the creation of several design concepts for initial consideration. In October 2024, those design concepts were presented to the Active Transportation Program (ATP) Subcommittee for preliminary feedback. Based upon those comments, the Consultant reduced and revised the concepts for further public consideration. The agenda item and presentation can be found as Attachment 5.

Community Survey: Design Concept Input

In November 2024, the City released an additional community survey to receive input on three design sets of wayfinding and monument signage. The City received 603 responses. The survey results showed that Design 1A (monument signs) and Design 1B (wayfinding) have the strongest community preference trends (i.e., most likes, fewest dislikes). The results can be found as Attachment 6.

Architectural Review Commission

In January 2025, the City and Consultant presented to the Architectural Review Commission (Commission) the three design sets of wayfinding and monument signage. The Commission provided valuable feedback on the concepts. Based upon those comments, the Consultant revised the concepts which are presented today. The minutes and presentation can be found as Attachment 7.

Revised Design Concept Feedback

Based on the design development process, community input, and previous City Council feedback, staff request the City Council to review and provide input on the three revised design sets for citywide wayfinding and entry monument signage. Specifically, staff seeks guidance on preferred design elements and modifications before finalizing the next iteration, which will then be presented to the City Council in the future. The presentation can be found as Attachment 8.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with providing design input at this stage. The City and Consultant have preliminary Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) cost estimates, which will be refined as design preferences are finalized and the Plan is completed. Cost projections will become clearer with the indication of a preferred design and detailed specifications. Future financial considerations, including fabrication, installation, and maintenance, will be presented to the City Council for review and approval before implementation. The Consultant will discuss ROM cost estimates and considerations during the study session.

The following table illustrates current project design expenses:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Balance</i>
<i>2134300-5000910</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>		
<i>Design Wayfinding Master Plan – A46980</i>		<i>\$87,500</i>	
<i>Contingency – A46980</i>		<i>\$20,000</i>	
<i>Design Entry Monument – A47210</i>		<i>\$50,000</i>	
<i>Contingency – A47210</i>		<i>\$5,000</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>	<i>\$162,500</i>	<i>\$87,500</i>

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Study Session Presentation (March 2023)
2. Professional Services Agreement: Wayfinding (January 2024)
3. Professional Services Agreement: Monument Signs (March 2024)
4. Community Survey: Initial Feedback (March 2024)
5. ATP Subcommittee: Agenda Item and Presentation (October 2024)
6. Community Survey: Design Concept Input (November 2024)
7. Architectural Review Commission: Minutes and Presentation (January 2025)
8. Study Session Presentation