Atascadero City Council
Staff Report – Community Development Department

PLN 2011-1404
AUP 2011-0051
Downtown Wayfinding Signage

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Council adopt Draft Resolution A approving PLN 2011-1404/AUP 2011-0051 permitting the installation of six (6) illuminated wayfinding signs in the Downtown along El Camino Real, Entrada Avenue and Traffic Way; and,

2. Authorize an exemption of the formal bidding process in accordance with Section II 3.1.h.4 of the City of Atascadero Purchasing Policy and award the purchase of a total of two (2) illuminated decorative street signs and four (4) kiosks as designed to Signs of Success, Inc. for $48,118.63.

DISCUSSION:

SITUATION AND FACTS:

1. Owner/Applicant: City of Atascadero, 6907 El Camino Real, Atascadero, CA 93422

2. Project Address: Intersection of El Camino Real/Entrada Avenue
Intersection of El Camino Real/Traffic Way
5900 Block of Entrada Avenue/Traffic Way

3. General Plan Designation: Downtown (D)

4. Zoning District: Downtown Commercial (DC)

5. Site Area: Existing Street right-of-way

6. Existing Use: Downtown Commercial / City Right-of-Way

7. Environmental Status: Class 3 Categorical Exemption: Accessory Structures
A request to approve an Administrative Use Permit to allow additional wayfinding signs in the Downtown that consists of four (4) illuminated informational kiosks and two (2) illuminated decorative street signs in the Downtown. Staff is also requesting that the City Council approve funding for fabrication and installation of the proposed wayfinding signage.

Background: In February 2007, the City Council approved a wayfinding program to better identify the Downtown Core. The City has moved forward with implementing various portions of the wayfinding program. The following wayfinding signage has been completed consistent with the approved plan:

A. A monument sign on Southbound US 101;
B. Vehicle Information Signage off Traffic Way exit of Northbound US 101;
C. Colony District Markers at various locations;
D. Parking Signs at various locations

The primary goal of the wayfinding program is to enhance the prominence of businesses in the Downtown.

Over the last year, City staff has been coordinating with the Main Street Association regarding additional signage for businesses in the Downtown, with the purpose of attracting residents and visitors to the various downtown shops and restaurants. In December of 2010, Main Street proposed a large directory sign that listed businesses in the Downtown Area.

City staff erected a large “wayfinding” mock-up sign at various intersections to determine the feasibility of such a sign. The sign generated mixed feedback from business owners in the Downtown and the public. Ultimately, the sign was deemed too large and out of scale with the Downtown.

After this pilot project, staff and Main Street looked at other alternatives that would reduce the visual impact of the wayfinding signage, consistent with the look and intent of the adopted program. Based on the initial feedback of the large wayfinding sign, it was determined that many businesses would be in support of additional exposure that wayfinding may provide. The intent of the proposed additional wayfinding signage is to generate additional vehicle and foot traffic at retail and restaurant establishments in the Downtown.
the Downtown.

Analysis: The Main Street Association’s latest proposal is to rebrand a portion of Entrada Avenue from El Camino Real to Palma Avenue as the “Shops on Entrada” and the portion of Traffic Way from El Camino Real to Lewis Avenue as “Shops on Traffic”. Part of this rebranding effort would include two (2) illuminated decorative street signs directing traffic to the retail area, and four (4) pedestrian kiosks. These signs will be located within the right-of-way directing pedestrian traffic to various businesses along Entrada Avenue and Traffic Way. Depending on the success of this project, additional wayfinding signs could be added to other Downtown locations in the future. All wayfinding signs would be consistent with the color and design scheme that has been approved as a part of the City’s overall Wayfinding Program.

The Atascadero Municipal Code (AMC) allows the use of informational kiosks consistent with 9-15.005(d)(2) with the approval of an Administrative Use Permit (AUP). The illuminated decorative street signs containing a “Shops on Entrada” and “Shops on Traffic” do not require an AUP, however, due to the design and characteristics of these special types of signs, they will be included as a part of the overall package.

Illuminated Decorative Street Signs
The illuminated, decorative street signs are comprised of a decorative custom base with a pole that is 12-feet in height with a 5-inch diameter. The top of the pole includes the City’s cast bronze “colony district” plaque. The decorative pole would include a 48-inch by 32-inch illuminated sign with decorative mounting. This portion of the sign will contain push through translucent letters that would be internally illuminated. The pole color would be consistent with the City’s adopted Wayfinding Program. The primary purpose of the sign is uniquely brand both Entrada Avenue and Traffic Way so that businesses could then advertise as being a “Shop on Entrada” or “shops on Traffic”.

The exact locations of the illuminated decorative street signs have yet to be determined. Staff is proposing the two general areas shown in Figure 1 as locations for the posts. The availability of electrical conduits will be key in siting the exact location of the decorative streets signs.
Illuminated Directional Kiosks
The illuminated directional kiosks are 7.25-feet high/3-feet wide double facing and internally lit signs. The signs would contain a tempered glass door that allows for access to directory and the ability to change the directory as needed. The directional kiosks would sit on a 7-foot color pole that is consistent with existing Downtown poles. Consistent with the City's Wayfinding Program, the directional kiosks will contain the “Colony District” bronze plaque.

The exact locations of the illuminated kiosks have yet to be determined. Staff is proposing the five general areas shown in Figure 2 as potential locations for the kiosks. The availability of electrical conduits will be key in siting the exact location of the kiosks, similar to the illuminated decorative street signs. Careful consideration will be made to site the kiosks in order to provide maximum exposure to businesses through the directory.
Main Street Participation
The project has been promoted by the Main Street Organization. The proposed wayfinding signs have been reviewed and are supported by the Main Street Board (see letter of support, Attachment 5). In exchange for installing the signs, Main Street is offering to maintain the signs and police unpermitted A-frame signs. This would include periodic maintenance and repair of the signs along with kiosk updates twice a year. Main Street has also promised to police unpermitted A-frame signs that are placed at street corner. The City ordinance requires A-frame signs to only be located directly in front of the business; they are not permitted to be placed on street corners or other “off-site” locations.

Staff is recommending that the City and Main Street enter into a maintenance and performance agreement prior to installation of the signs.

Environmental Review: Class 3 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Section 15303) exempts the construction of small structures or facilities including street improvements.
Conclusion: The Atascadero Municipal Code allows for the placement and construction of informational kiosks in any zoning district. Approval of the size, location, and maintenance requirements for such kiosks shall be established through Administrative Use Permit. The proposed kiosks will be located along Traffic Way and Entrada Avenue to draw attention to the retail and restaurants that are on these streets. In addition, these kiosks are compatible with the previously approved wayfinding program.

The illuminated decorative street signs contain the “colony district” marker and create a visual cue for motorists along El Camino Real directing them to either the “Shops on Entrada” or “the Shops on Traffic.” These decorative street signs are consistent with the intent and look of the City’s wayfinding program.

Staff recommends approval of the AUP as well as authorization of funding for additional wayfinding signs along El Camino Real, Entrada Avenue and Traffic Way.

Findings for Approval: An Administrative Use Permit shall be approved if the hearing body makes the following findings in the affirmative:

1. The proposed project is determined to qualify for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), consistent with Section 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures).

2. The proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with the General Plan.

3. The proposal, as conditioned, will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the general public or persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the use, or be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity of the use.

4. The proposal will be consistent with the character of the immediate neighborhood.

5. The proposed project will not result in the authorization of a use not otherwise allowed.

6. The proposed project will not result in a project that is not in compliance with any pertinent City policy or criteria adopted by ordinance or resolution of the City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The estimated cost to purchase a total of two (2) illuminated decorative street signs and four (4) kiosks as designed is approximately $48,118.63 of Blight Elimination funds. It is estimated that yearly maintenance for the proposed wayfinding signage is approximately $500. This includes cleaning the inside cabinets, maintaining the lighting
inside all illuminated areas, and cleaning of the wayfinding signs. Updates to the directory would cost $625 twice a year ($1250 annually). It is staff’s understanding that Main Street would be responsible for the maintenance and updating costs.

The Council does have the option of choosing wayfinding signage that is not illuminated. The cost of this signage package is approximately $38,000, 20% less than the estimated total, or a cost savings of approximately $10,000.

These estimates have been provided by the signage company that staff has been working with to ensure consistency with the City’s adopted Wayfinding Program. The City’s purchasing policy requires that any material or purchase over $40,000 must be awarded and that formal bidding should be used to assure that the City receives the most competitive price. However, the formal bidding process may not be the best way to purchase custom designed signs for the Downtown.

Staff recommends that the Council make a finding consistent with the City’s purchasing policy to utilize an exception to the formal bidding process. Staff believes that due to the artistic creativity of the proposed wayfinding signage, Signs of Success, Inc. should be awarded the bid. This is consistent with the formal bidding exception found in Section II 3.1.h.4 of the City of Atascadero Purchasing Policy.

Section II 3.1.h.4 – City of Atascadero Purchasing Policy

When there are extenuating circumstances that would make formal bidding not the most cost effective approach. This often relates to qualitative, artistic or proprietary software/technological issues. The appropriate department head shall prepare a report to Council (Board in this Case) requesting an exemption from the formal bidding procedures.

An exception to the formal bidding process for the fabrication of the wayfinding signs may be made as long as the Council makes the following findings in the affirmative:

1. The wayfinding signage is an extenuating circumstance that would make formal bidding not the most cost effective approach.

2. The wayfinding signage is an artistic expression therefore fabricating the exact signage may be difficult.

3. It is in the City’s best interest to award the bid to Signs of Success, INC to ensure the most cost effective approach.

The City Engineer estimated cost to install the Downtown Wayfinding signage established at approximately $39,600. Staff is recommending a formal bid process for this work to provide the most competitive price.
The total fiscal impact to the City:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Wayfinding signage</td>
<td>$48,118.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction estimate</td>
<td>$39,600.00</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$87,718.63</strong></td>
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Annual cost to Main Street:

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<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance and lighting</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kiosk directory updates</td>
<td>$1250.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1750.00</strong></td>
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**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment 1 – Location Map (General Plan & Zoning)
- Attachment 2 – Site Photos
- Attachment 3 – Visual Simulations
- Attachment 4 – Proposed Wayfinding Signage
- Attachment 5 – Main Street Letter of Support
- Attachment 6 – Draft Redevelopment Agency Resolution A
ATTACHMENT 1: Location Map (General Plan and Zoning)
PLN 2011-1404 / AUP 2011-0051
Downtown Wayfinding Program
ATTACHMENT 2: Site Photos
PLN 2011-1404 / AUP 2011-0051
Downtown Wayfinding Program
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Downtown Wayfinding Program
ATTACHMENT 3: Visual Simulations
PLN 2011-1404 / AUP 2011-0051
Downtown Wayfinding Program
ATTACHMENT 3:  Visual Simulations
PLN 2011-1404 / AUP 2011-0051
Downtown Wayfinding Program
June 6, 2011

Warren Frace
City of Atascadero
6907 El Camino Real
Atascadero CA 93422

Dear Warren,

The Atascadero Main Street Board of Directors is pleased to support the directional signage program we have developed jointly to serve the wayfinding needs of downtown. Furthermore, the Atascadero Main Street Board of Directors commits to clean and update the kiosk signage and work with business owners to remove the A-frames located at street corners.

Thank you for your help in creating and implementing this attractive and effective new signage program.

Sincerely,

Larry Wysong
President, Atascadero Main Street Board of Directors

Cc:

Wade McKinney, City Manager
Atascadero Main Street Board of Directors
DRAFT RESOLUTION A
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING

APPROVAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE USE PERMIT 2011-0054 TO
ALLOW FOR THE INSTALLATION OF WAYFINDING
INFORMATIONAL KIOSKS AND WAYFINDING DECORATIVE
STREET SIGNS IN THE DOWNTOWN

THE ATASCADERO CITY COUNCIL DOES HEREBY RESOLVE THAT:

WHEREAS, the City of Atascadero has approved a City Wayfinding Program to
enhance the prominence of the Downtown area to encourage economic development and the
elimination of blight; and,

WHEREAS, a request has been received from the Atascadero Community
Redevelopment Agency and the Atascadero Main Street Organization, to allow for the
construction of wayfinding informational kiosks and wayfinding decorative street signs along El
Camino Real, Entrada Avenue and Traffic Way; and,

WHEREAS, the Council finds that extenuating circumstances that would make formal
bidding not the most cost effective approach to purchasing custom Downtown Wayfinding sign
because of the qualitative and artistic nature of the signs; and.

WHEREAS, the City Council, acting as the Administrative Hearing Officer, held a duly
noticed Administrative Hearing at the City Hall on June 28, 2011; at 6:00 pm; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Atascadero

SECTION 1. THE ATASCADERO CITY COUNCIL MAKES THE FOLLOWING
FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS APPROVING AUP 2001-0054:

1. The proposed project is determined to qualify for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption
from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), consistent with Section
15303 (Minor Structures).

2. The proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with the General Plan.

3. The proposal, as conditioned, will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare
of the general public or persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the use,
or be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity of the use.
4. The proposal will be consistent with the character of the immediate neighborhood.

5. The proposed project will not result in the authorization of a use not otherwise allowed.

6. The proposed project will not result in a project that is not in compliance with any pertinent City policy or criteria adopted by ordinance or resolution of the City Council.

SECTION 2. THE ATASCADERO CITY COUNCIL MAKES THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS TO WAIVE THE BIDDING PROCESS FOR THE PURCHASE OF SIX (6) DOWNTOWN WAYFINDING SIGNS:

1. The wayfinding signage is an extenuating circumstance that would make formal bidding not the most cost effective approach.

2. The wayfinding signage is an artistic expression therefore fabricating the exact signage may be difficult.

3. It is in the Redevelopment Agency’s and the City’s best interest to award the bid to Signs of Success, INC to ensure the most cost effective approach.

SECTION 3. THE ATASCADERO CITY COUNCIL ENDORSES THE EXPENDITURE OF $87,000 IN BLIGHT ELIMINATION FUNDS FOR THE FABRICATION AND INSTALLATION OF THE DOWNTOWN WAYFINDING SIGNS:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE ATASCADERO CITY COUNCIL APPROVES THIS RESOLUTION SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Exhibit A: Conditions of Approval
2. Exhibit B: Categorical Exemption
3. Exhibit C: Proposed Wayfinding Signage

On motion by Council Member ________________, and seconded by Council Member ________________ the foregoing resolution is hereby adopted by the following roll call vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: June 28, 2011
CITY OF ATASCADERO

By: ______________________________
    Tom O’Malley, Mayor

ATTEST:

Marcia McClure Torgerson, C.M.C., City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

__________________________
Brian A. Pierik, City Attorney
**EXHIBIT A: Conditions of Approval**  
**PLN 2010-1380 / CUP 2010-0254**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition of Approval</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Responsibility / Monitoring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUP 2011-0054</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Conditions</strong></td>
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<td>1. The granting of this Administrative Use Permit shall apply to the construction of up to four (4) illuminated wayfinding information kiosks in and around the downtown on Entrada Avenue and Traffic Way. This permit shall also apply for the construction of up to two (2) illuminated wayfinding decorative street signs on El Camino Real near the intersections of Entrada Avenue and Traffic Way.</td>
<td><strong>On Going</strong></td>
<td><strong>PS, BS</strong></td>
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<td>2. The hearing officer’s decisions shall be final unless appealed as provided in Section 9-1.111 of the Atascadero Municipal Code.</td>
<td><strong>BP</strong></td>
<td><strong>PS</strong></td>
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<td>3. Wayfinding sign fabrication shall be in conformance with Exhibit C. Any modification to this approval shall be approved by the Community Development Department prior to implementing any changes.</td>
<td><strong>BP</strong></td>
<td><strong>PS</strong></td>
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<td>4. Final location of wayfinding signage shall be approved by the Community Development Department prior to issuance of a building permit.</td>
<td><strong>BP</strong></td>
<td><strong>PS</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td>5. Applicant shall obtain a building permit and inspection for each sign to ensure compliance with this approval and the Uniform Building Code.</td>
<td><strong>BP/FO</strong></td>
<td><strong>BS</strong></td>
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<td>6. Prior to installation of the signs, the City and Main Street shall enter into a performance and maintenance agreement specifying that Main Street is responsible for the following:</td>
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<td>A. Maintenance, repair and cleaning of the signs.</td>
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<td>B. Updates to the tenant directories, twice a year.</td>
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<td>C. Monitoring and management of un-permitted A-Frames throughout the Downtown district.</td>
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CITY OF ATASCADERO
NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

6907 El Camino Real  Atascadero, CA  93422  805.461.5000

TO:  File
June 6, 2011

FROM:  Alfredo R. Castillo, AICP
Assistant Planner
City of Atascadero
6907 El Camino Real
Atascadero, CA 93422

SUBJECT:  Filing of Notice of Determination in Compliance with Section 21152 of the Public Resources Code.

Project Title:  Administrative Use Permit 2010-0054

Project Location:  5900-6400 Blocks of El Camino Real; 5900 Block of Traffic Way; 5900 Block of Entrada Avenue.

Project Description:  Additional wayfinding signs in Downtown including four (4) illuminated kiosks and two (2) illuminated decorative street signs for placement in the Downtown.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:  City of Atascadero

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:  Community Redevelopment Agency Atascadero (applicant)

Exempt Status:

☐ Ministerial (Sec. 15073)  ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 1507 (b) and (c))
☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 15061 (a))  ☐ General Rule Exemption (Sec. 15061.c)
☒ Categorically Exempt (Sec. 15301)

Reasons why project is exempt:  Class 3 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Section 15303, Construction of Accessory Structures) construction of small accessory structures such as on-premise signs or other facilities designed for public use.

Contact Person:  Alfredo R. Castillo  (805) 470-3436

Date:  June 6, 2011

Alfredo R. Castillo, AICP
Assistant Planner
EXHIBIT C: Proposed Wayfinding Signage