



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

LAND USE AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Fifth District

DATE: August 17, 2022

09

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

COMMUNITY IDENTIFICATION SIGNAGE PROGRAM IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY (DISTRICT: 5)

OVERVIEW

On October 5, 2021 (12), the San Diego County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to develop a community identification signage program for the Fifth District and return to the Board with options for approval.

Decorative community identification signs are typically ground-mounted, or span across a main street and are found in the public right-of-way. These signs identify the name of a community at the primary or gateway entrances and express a community's sense of identity. These decorative signs provide communities an opportunity to build character around residential and commercial development and share the history of the area through symbolic elements. These signs also welcome visitors. To date, there are no ground-mounted or street spanning decorative community identification signs in any of the Fifth District communities, which include three community planning areas (Fallbrook, Rainbow, and Valley Center) and six community sponsor areas (Bonsall, Borrego Springs, Hidden Meadows, Pala/Pauma, Palomar Mountain, and Twin Oaks Valley).

There are currently two established programs for unincorporated communities that may want to display community pride through signage in the public right-of-way along County-maintained roads. The first program, Community Identity Signs (Green Signs), created by the Department of Public Works (DPW) on May 1, 1998, allows communities to request small ground-mounted green signs with white lettering, which include the name of each community, the population, and the elevation. These signs are located within the public right of way, do not require a permit, mark the community boundaries, and are used by motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists as directional guides. These green signs are available at no cost to communities and are maintained and installed by DPW.

The second program, Decorative Community Identification Signage, was approved by the Board on January 29, 2014 (7). This program includes formal guidelines for the installation of larger, decorative street-spanning or ground-mounted community signs and banners along County-

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maintained roads. The Decorative Community Identification Signage Program is an applicant-driven process, where stakeholders are responsible for all costs related to planning, permitting, design, installation, and maintenance along with all associated County review and enforcement costs. The total cost to the applicant ranges from approximately \$75,000 to \$245,000 per sign, depending on design, width, and structural features.

On October 5, 2021 (12), Supervisor Desmond allocated Neighborhood Reinvestment Funds to DPW and Planning and Development Services (PDS) to fund staff efforts to develop potential alternative options for decorative community identification signs for unincorporated communities in the Fifth District. In response to the direction, staff conducted public outreach efforts in fall 2021 to Community Planning and Sponsor Groups (CPSGs) in the Fifth District. The CPSGs expressed a desire for an option where the applicants, specifically community groups, would take the lead in developing the architectural concept for a sign. The Board office, alongside County staff, would then facilitate the community's architectural concept through design, construction, and maintenance. Similar to the current applicant-driven process, this alternative option would also require an appropriate funding source(s) identified by the Board, for all costs related to the pre-consultation, preliminary design and engineering, environmental review, construction, and ongoing maintenance activities for each community identification sign project that County staff would facilitate. It is estimated that it would cost the County approximately \$165,000 to \$590,000 per sign to implement the staff facilitated option, not including annual maintenance costs.

Today staff are presenting options for permitting and constructing decorative community identification signs, using the feedback provided by the Fifth District communities, for the Board's consideration and direction: option 3A) maintain the existing applicant-driven Decorative Community Identification Signage Program; option 3B) maintain the existing Decorative Community Identification Signage Program, and direct staff to return to the Board in [180] days to establish the ordinance to implement a Board-approved waiver of all County permit fees to make the existing applicant-driven process more affordable for the community; option 3C) Approve a new County staff facilitated option for decorative community identification signs in which an applicant(s) would work with County staff, the Community Planning or Sponsor Group for the community in which the proposed sign is located, and the Board office to develop an architectural concept and layout and identify project funding.

Although the original Board direction from October 5, 2021, was to only develop options in addition to the existing community identification sign program for the communities of the Fifth District (4A), the Board could direct staff to offer the additional options to all unincorporated communities (4B). If approved, a Board office would need to docket a Board letter requesting approval for use of County General Funds for sign options 3A and 3B as described above. No funding for the permitting or construction of any signs is included with today's action.

RECOMMENDATION(S)
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Find that the Negative Declaration (ND) for the Community Signs and Banners in the Public Right-of-Way – Zoning Ordinance and County Code Amendments, on file with the Department of Public Works (DPW), dated October 28, 2013, State Clearinghouse No.

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2013071003, was adopted in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) on January 29, 2014, and that the decision-making body has reviewed and considered the information contained therein, prior to approving the project; and:

Find that there are no substantial changes in the project or in the circumstances under which it is undertaken which involve significant new environmental impacts that were not considered in the previously adopted ND, dated October 28, 2013, and that no new information of substantial importance, such as a new significant effect, has become available since the ND was adopted.

2. This recommendation maintains the existing Community Identity Sign (Green Sign) Program with no changes for all unincorporated communities. DPW will continue to fund new sign requests at a cost of approximately \$800 per new sign and will continue to maintain the existing 90 Green signs through DPW's annual Road Fund budget.
3. Select one or more of the following options for the Decorative Community Identification Signage Program:

Option A: No changes to the existing applicant funded Decorative Community Identification Signage Program: the total cost to the applicant per sign is approximately \$75,000-\$245,000.

Option B: Develop a fee waiver for the existing Decorative Community Identification Signage Program, in which the Board of Supervisors (Board) would waive Policy B-29 to allow for an applicant's pre-consultation and permit application fees to be waived, at a cost to the County of approximately \$10,000 to \$20,000 per sign. Direct staff to return to the Board within 180 days to present an ordinance for consideration to implement the fee waiver and establish appropriations to offset the fee waiver.

Option C: Approve a new County of San Diego staff facilitated Decorative Community Identification Signage Program at a cost of approximately \$165,000 to \$590,000 per sign. The cost of each sign will be based on design, width, and structural elements. Funding for each sign would require separate approval by the Board at the point at which a community is ready to move forward to design with a sign concept.

4. If option 3B and/or 3C is selected above, then select a geographic area for which the decorative community identification signage program option(s) applies:

Option A: District 5 unincorporated communities only (as directed by the Board on October 5, 2021).

Option B: All unincorporated communities in San Diego county. This option requires DPW to conduct additional outreach to unincorporated communities located outside District 5 to provide information about the new decorative community signage program option(s) selected by the Board.

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EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Both the Green Signs and Decorative Community Identification Signage Program support community character and promote a sense of identity in the unincorporated area.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are not included in the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Operational Plan in the Department of Public Works (DPW), General Fund, or Planning & Development Services (PDS) Department.

Costs vary per option selected. The cost of each sign will be based on design, width, and structural elements.

Recommendation 2: Maintain the existing Green Sign Program for all unincorporated communities at no additional costs to the County of San Diego (County). DPW will continue to fund Green Sign requests at a cost of approximately \$800 per new sign and will continue to maintain the existing 90 Green Signs through DPW's annual Road Fund budget. Funds for this option are included in the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Operational Plan for DPW.

Recommendation 3:

Option 3A: Maintain the existing applicant funded Decorative Community Identification Signage Program for all unincorporated communities. The total cost to the applicant per sign is approximately \$75,000-\$245,000. Funds for this option would be paid by the applicant.

Option 3B: Develop a fee waiver for the existing Decorative Community Identification Signage Program to allow for a waiver of the County pre-consultation and permit application fees for community identification signage. The cost to the County will range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per community sign, depending on the signage design and individual permitting requirements for that location. Funding for the fee waivers would need to be identified and approved by the Board. If directed, DPW and PDS would return to the Board with an ordinance for consideration to implement the fee waiver and to establish appropriations to offset the fee waiver.

Option 3C: Approve a new Decorative Community Identification Signage Program option where County staff facilitate each sign installation project, including maintenance. In order to install a new community identification sign, DPW anticipates three stages in which County staff will be involved in order to implement the program: pre-consultation, preliminary design and engineering, and final design, construction, and maintenance. The total approximate cost per sign is \$165,000 to \$590,000, as the cost of each sign will be based on design, width, and structural elements. Further details are provided in the background section. Funding for each sign will need to be identified and approved by the Board in a separate action. As with all County construction projects, each sign project will adhere to prevailing wage requirements. Regarding long-term sign maintenance costs, DPW anticipates ongoing annual maintenance costs will range from approximately \$500 to \$5,000 per installed sign, outside of any unplanned major repairs due to damage.

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BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

Several unincorporated communities in the Fifth District expressed a desire to the Board of Supervisors to create and place decorative community identification signs in the County of San Diego public right-of-way. These signs identify and distinguish communities to visitors and residents and establish a greater sense of place and character. Without sacrificing road safety, signs could also provide information to visitors about points of interest, commercial districts, and community events. Economic development was at the core of these requests to direct visitors to local shops and businesses.

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

To comply with Board direction to develop alternative options for a decorative community identification signage program for the unincorporated communities of the Fifth District, staff engaged and solicited input from all nine Community Planning and Sponsor Groups located within the Fifth District. Community group correspondence is located within the community input document (Attachment A). A summary of community group levels of support is presented here:

Community Input	Level of Support
Community Planning & Sponsor Groups	
Bonsall CSG	Written Support
Borrego Springs CSG	Written Support
Fallbrook CPG	Written Support
Hidden Meadows CSG	Written Support
Pala/Pauma CSG	No Response - Due to Lack of CSG Members
Palomar Mountain CSG	Written Support
Rainbow CPG	Written Support
Twin Oaks Valley CSG	Verbal Support
Valley Center CPG	Written Support

BACKGROUND

On October 5, 2021 (12), the San Diego County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) approved a recommendation by Fifth District Supervisor Jim Desmond directing the Chief Administrative Officer to develop a community identification signage program for the Fifth District and return to the Board with options for approval. The proposed decorative community identification signage options have been developed in addition to the existing Board-established program guidelines for identification signs described below.

Community identification signs are decorative, civic-focused signs that are typically ground-mounted, or span across a main street and are found in the public right-of-way. These signs identify the name of a community at the primary or gateway entrances and express a community's sense of identity. These decorative signs provide communities an opportunity to build character around residential and commercial development, and they share the history of the area through symbolic elements. These signs also welcome visitors. To date, there are no ground-mounted or street spanning community identification signs in any of the Fifth District communities, which include three community planning areas (Fallbrook, Rainbow, and Valley Center) and six community

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sponsor areas (Bonsall, Borrego Springs, Hidden Meadows, Pala/Pauma, Palomar Mountain, and Twin Oaks Valley).

Existing Community Sign Programs

There are currently two established programs for unincorporated communities that may want to display community information through signage in the public right-of-way along County-maintained roads.

Community Identity Signs (Green Signs)

The first program, Community Identity Signs (Green Signs), created by the Department of Public Works (DPW) on May 1, 1998, allows communities to request small ground-mounted green signs with white lettering, which include the name of each community, the population, and the elevation. Using standard sign requirements developed by the State, DPW created Green Sign guidelines that allow communities to have signs that state "Welcome to (Community Name), an Unincorporated Community of the County of San Diego." The Green Signs are placed at the limits of the unincorporated community on major County Mobility Element roads or State Highways. An example is shown in the image below:



Over the last 30 years, DPW has installed 90 Green Signs in approximately 40 unincorporated communities. Although DPW provides these signs DPW at no cost to communities, the local Community Planning or Sponsor Group (CPG or CSG) is responsible for requesting Green Signs. Once a formal request is received, DPW will review potential installation of locations. If there is no CPG or CSG for a community, then the County will evaluate the installation of a Green Sign based on the daily traffic volume. Typically, these signs cost the County approximately \$800 per sign to make and are installed in approximately eight weeks. These standard roadside signs are located within the public right-of-way, do not require a permit and are intended to promote community pride. They are used by motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists as directional guides while they travel. Costs associated with this program are allocated through the Road Fund. Communities continue to request these standard roadside community Green Signs today.

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Decorative Community Identification Signage Program

On January 29, 2014 (7), the Board established the Decorative Community Identification Signage Program. This applicant funded program includes formal guidelines for the installation of larger, decorative street-spanning or ground-mounted community signs and banners in the public right-of-way on County-maintained roads. This program was developed after staff conducted outreach with Community Planning and Sponsor Groups (CPSGs), civic groups, and external stakeholders. This 2014 Board action included the adoption of changes to the County Zoning Ordinance, changes to the County Code, the Community Signs and Banners in the Public Right-of-Way Program Guidelines¹, and environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Negative Declaration (ND). The Board approved an applicant-driven process in which permittees are required to reimburse the County for the installation and ongoing maintenance of any signs or banners placed in the public right-of-way.

In the existing program, County staff encourage interested applicants to ask general questions related to the application, permitting, maintenance, and design requirements. Once the applicant has raised the funds necessary for the project, Planning & Development Services (PDS) and Department of Public Works (DPW) staff will begin the formal review of the proposal, permits, the design and location of the sign. Once permits are issued and the sign is complete, staff will conduct a final review. Applicants are responsible for all costs related to planning, permitting, design, installation, maintenance, and removal activities, along with all associated County review and enforcement costs.

Since its inception in 2014, Lakeside has been the only unincorporated community that has utilized the existing Decorative Community Identification Signage Program. The Lakeside Chamber of Commerce took the lead to install a large street-spanning community identification sign on Maine Avenue, which took two years to complete (pictured below).



¹ https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/dpw/transportation/Signs_Banners.html

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The project began with pre-consultation with County staff regarding program requirements. The Lakeside Chamber of Commerce, alongside their community volunteers, continued the process and submitted required permits, obtained consultant design services, and selected construction teams. It is estimated that the capital costs of the project included \$55,000 for planning and design services and \$90,000 for construction services. The community offset nearly half of its direct costs via County Neighborhood Reinvestment Program funding from the Second District office, local fundraising, and business sponsorships. However, the total costs did not include hundreds of hours of volunteer time from community members to manage all required tasks.

Community Outreach

In response to the Board direction to develop potential alternative options for decorative community identification signage for unincorporated communities in the Fifth District, staff conducted public outreach efforts in fall of 2021 to CPSGs in the Fifth District. The CPSGs expressed a desire for an alternative option for a community identification signage program, in which the applicants, specifically community groups, would take the lead in developing the architectural concept for the sign. The Board office, alongside County staff, would then facilitate the community's architectural concept through design, construction, and maintenance.

Similar to the current applicant-driven process, this option would also require an identified funding source(s). The funding source would need to be identified by the Board, for all costs related to the pre-consultation, preliminary design and engineering, environmental review, construction, and ongoing maintenance activities for each community identification sign project. CPSGs indicated that it would be helpful to have experienced County staff facilitate the design, construction, and maintenance of community signs rather than relying on community volunteers to lead the process. Community groups recognized it will be significantly more expensive for County staff to facilitate the process from start to finish compared to having volunteers lead the process. It is estimated to cost the County from \$165,000 to \$590,000 per sign to implement an alternative option facilitated by County staff, not including annual maintenance costs.

Staff Recommendations:

Recommendation 2: Based on the feedback provided by the Fifth District communities, staff recommends maintaining the existing Community Identity Signs (Green Signs) program with no changes. DPW provides the standard Green Signs at the entrances to unincorporated communities. DPW will continue to fund new sign requests at a cost of approximately \$800 per new sign and maintain the existing 90 signs through DPW's annual Road Fund budget.

In addition, based on the feedback from Fifth District communities, staff have prepared options for permitting and constructing decorative community identification signs in the unincorporated communities, for the Board's consideration and direction as described below.

Recommendation 3: Options for Decorative Community Identification Signage

Option A: Maintain the existing applicant funded Decorative Community Identification Signage Program for all unincorporated communities. Maintain the existing applicant-driven Community Identification Signage Program for ground-mounted or street-spanning signs that

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requires an applicant, such as a community group, to secure funding to design a sign, seek a permit from County staff for the sign, and hire a contractor to install the sign. This process costs approximately \$75,000-\$245,000 per sign for the applicant.

Option B: Develop a fee waiver for the existing Decorative Community Identification Signage Program to allow for a waiver of the County pre-consultation and permit application fees for community identification signage. The cost to the County will range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per community sign, depending on the signage design and individual permitting requirements for that location. This option preserves the existing sign programs described in option 3A; however, it allows for the Board to waive Policy B-29: Fees, Grants, Revenue Contracts, which requires full cost recovery for all fees. The cost for staff to permit a decorative community identification sign typically ranges from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per sign depending on the design and location of the sign. Waiving all permit fees for a sign would represent a significant cost savings to the community that might make this option more attractive to an applicant.

The Board could take action on an annual basis to waive the permit fees associated with the existing decorative community identification signage program. Staff would report out at the end of each fiscal year on the amount of fees waived in that fiscal year. Currently, DPW and PDS do not have funding allocated for the decorative community signage program in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Operational Plan. If the Board decided to allocate funding for the program, staff would recommend \$100,000 in order to waive fees for approximately 5-10 community signs per year. If directed, DPW and PDS would return to the Board in [180] days with an ordinance for consideration to implement the fee waiver, which would establish appropriations to offset the fee waiver.

Option 3C: Approve a new Decorative Community Identification Signage Program option where County staff facilitate each sign installation project, including maintenance. In order to install a new decorative community identification sign, DPW anticipates three stages in which County staff will be involved in order to implement the program: pre-consultation, preliminary design and engineering, and final design, construction, and maintenance. The total approximate cost per sign is \$165,000 to \$590,000, as the cost of each sign will be based on design, width, and structural elements. Funding for each sign will need to be identified and approved by the Board in a separate action. As with all County construction projects, each sign project will adhere to prevailing wage requirements. Regarding long-term sign maintenance costs, DPW anticipates ongoing annual maintenance costs will range from approximately \$500 to \$5,000 per installed sign, outside of any unplanned major repairs due to damage.

The proposal for a County staff facilitated Decorative Community Identification Signage Program option in the unincorporated communities will follow the existing applicant-driven Board-established program guidelines; however, under the updated program, the Board office would work with County staff to determine an appropriate funding source(s) for all costs related to the pre-consultation, preliminary design and engineering, environmental review, construction, and ongoing maintenance activities for Community Identification Signs, as there is currently no funding allocated for the program. If County General Funds are requested as the funding source for one or more phases of this staff facilitated program, the Board office would need to docket a

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Board Letter requesting Board approval for the funding before County staff begin pre-consultation. No funding for this option is included with today's action.

DPW anticipates three categories that will require staff review and funding in order to implement the following potential County staff facilitated Decorative Community Identification Signage Program option, which includes: 1) pre-consultation for architectural concept and location, 2) preliminary design and engineering, and 3) final design, construction, and maintenance as follows:

1. Pre-consultation for architectural concept and location

- a. Community Group Initial Support: The requestor(s) must be a constituent of the unincorporated community where the community identification signage(s) is proposed to be located. The requestor(s) must engage with the local Community Planning or Sponsor Group (CPG or CSG) for the community where the sign is proposed for initial support of the architectural concept and location. The architectural concept will need to provide sufficient detail for County staff to evaluate conformance with roadway safety criteria and community identification sign guidelines. A funding source would need to be identified prior to staff performing the pre-consultation. Potential funding sources could include District Neighborhood Reinvestment Program or Community Enhancement funding, a General Fund allocation, or a grant from an outside agency or organization.
- b. County Pre-Consultation: The requestor(s) will consult with DPW and PDS for review and comment on the community's architectural concept and layout. DPW will review the proposed concept and layout for cost, timeline, and CEQA requirements. The pre-consultation phase will cost approximately \$10,000-20,000 per sign location. The cost includes staff time to conduct a preliminary project review of the community's architectural concept and layout, including cost, timeline, and initial CEQA requirements.
- c. Community Group Formal Support: DPW and the requestor(s) will work jointly to obtain approval from the local CPG or CSG via a formal vote on a regularly scheduled agenda.
- d. Board Office Support and Funding for Preliminary Design and Engineering: The requestor(s), with support from DPW, will submit the completed initial concept and layout for the sign(s) and CPG or CSG support to the Board office. If County General Funds are requested as the funding source for the next phase or entire project, the Board office would docket a Board letter requesting Board funding approval.

2. Preliminary Design, Engineering, and Environmental Review

- a. County Conducts Preliminary Design, Engineering, and Environmental Review: If County funding was not allocated or approved, funding sources such as grants will need to be identified by the Board office, with support from the requestor and

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County staff, in order to move forward with the preliminary design, engineering, and environmental review phase. If funding was Board approved for this phase, DPW will then work with the requestor(s) to verify locations and safety requirements and conduct preliminary design and engineering and environmental review to determine options, including costs and timeline to implement the final design, construction, and maintenance needs to implement the sign(s). Regular updates will be provided to the CPG or CSG during this step. A preliminary engineering review to develop a 30% design will cost approximately \$25,000 (for a simple ground-mounted community sign) to \$75,000 (for a major street-spanning community sign) for staff and consultation services to conduct a more focused review in developing a 30% design and to determine the best alternatives to pursue.

- b. Board Office Support and Funding for Final Design and Implementation: The requestor(s), with support from DPW, will submit the timeline to implement the final design, construction, and maintenance plan to implement the sign(s) needs to the Board office.

3. Final Design, Construction, and Maintenance:

- a. County Implements Sign Project: If County funding was not allocated or approved, funding sources such as grants will need to be identified by the Board office, with support from the requestor and County staff, in order to move forward with the final design, construction, and maintenance phase. Following approvals, DPW will work with the requestor(s) to implement the final design and construction needs to implement the Community Identification Signage. Regular updates will be provided to the CPG or CSG during this step. Once design work is complete, DPW will present the project to the Board requesting approval to adopt the environmental document if applicable, bid, award, and construct the project. Final design and construction will cost approximately \$125,000 (for a simple ground-mounted community sign) to \$500,000 (for a major street-spanning community sign) for staff and consultation services to complete the project design, prepare to bid, and award the project, and construct the community identification sign. As with all County construction projects, this project will adhere to prevailing wage requirements.
- b. Maintenance: Ongoing maintenance costs are not included in the total cost estimate. However, staff has identified that ongoing maintenance costs could range from expected minor annual repairs in the range of \$500 per year to \$5,000 for unplanned complete replacement or major repairs. The Board office, with support from the requestor and County staff, will work together to establish an endowment for ongoing maintenance. If ongoing maintenance cost funding is depleted in the future, County staff would need to request additional funding from the Board for maintenance before making any repairs.

The estimated timeline to design and install a decorative community identification sign may range from two to three years based on community design recommendations and funding. Based on the

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three categories of review described above, total estimated costs range from \$165,000 to \$590,000 for a street-spanning decorative community identification sign based on design, structural elements, and construction costs. Maintenance costs are not included in the total cost estimate. The costs noted above are estimates, and final costs are dependent on the scope of the work requested at each community sign location and determined by the pre-consultation for architectural concept and location; preliminary design and engineering; final design, construction, and maintenance.

If the Board directs this option, staff will look for opportunities to streamline and update the above process based on lessons learned as communities come forward to implement the program.

Cost estimates for each phase of a sign project for each of the options for a Decorative Community Identification Signage Program:

Decorative Community Identification Signage Program Cost Estimates (Per Sign) ^(a)			
Project Phase	Option 3A: Current Applicant Funded Process*	Option 3B: Current Applicant Process with Fee Waiver	Option 3C: Proposed County Staff Facilitated Process
1. Pre-Consultation, Safe Location/Permits	County Site Plan Applicant Cost: \$10-\$20K ^(c)	Applicant Process with General Fund fund balance Offset County Cost: \$10-\$20K for permit fee waiver	County Process County Cost: \$15K ^(b)
2. Preliminary Engineering & 30% Design	Planning/Design Applicant Cost: \$25-\$75K	Applicant Process Applicant Cost: \$25-\$75K	Planning/Design County Cost: \$25-\$75K
3. Final 100% Design and Construction	Contractor Services Applicant Cost: \$40-\$150K	Applicant Process Applicant Cost: \$40-\$150K	Design/Construction County Cost: \$125-\$500K
Project Total	Applicant Process Applicant Cost: Total: \$75-\$245K	Applicant Process County Cost: \$10-\$20K Applicant Cost: \$65-\$225K Total Cost: \$75-\$245K	County Process County Cost: Total Cost: \$165-\$590K
Annual Maintenance:	Applicant Maintenance Applicant Cost: \$1-\$5K/yr	Applicant Maintenance Applicant Cost: \$1-\$5K/yr	Annual Maintenance County Cost: \$1-\$5K/yr
(a) The costs show ranges between a simple ground-mounted and a complex street-spanning Community ID sign (b) Current request is pre-consultation for 9 signs (1 each for 9 community groups) in District 5 (9 x \$15K = \$135K) * This table excludes the existing ground mounted green signs			

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Potential Funding Sources for a County Staff Facilitated Decorative Community Identification Signage Program

DPW maintains roads using the Road Fund, which is a restricted fund that can only be used for the upkeep of road-related infrastructure including streets, drainage, and traffic-related signals and guide signs, such as the small ground-mounted green and white, Green Signs. In contrast, the Decorative Community Identification Signage Program is considered an amenity and cannot be maintained using the Road Fund as a funding source. The permissible use of State gas tax funding is for the research, planning, construction, improvement, maintenance, and operation of public streets and highways. Decorative community identification signs do not serve a road purpose and are an aesthetic amenity not needed for the function of the public road. Therefore, the applicant funded Decorative Community Identification Signage will need to be constructed and preserved using funding from sources other than the Road Fund. DPW is able to fund Green Signs from the Road Fund because they are used as community boundary lines, and by motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists as directional guides.

Historically, decorative community identification signs have been developed, constructed, and maintained using private funds, with some of the funds offset by Neighborhood Reinvestment Program Funds, as approved by the Board. Option 3C for a County staff facilitated community identification signage program would require the Board office to identify funding for each sign for each phase or the full project. Potential sources include District Neighborhood Reinvestment Program or Community Enhancement funding, a Board approved General Fund allocation for the project, or a grant or other funding from an outside organization or private donors.

Decorative Community Identification Signage Roadway Safety Criteria

Community Identification Signs installed in the public right-of-way will be located to minimize hazards to all roadway users and not detract from the efficient use of roads. All signs will continue to ensure roadway safety by applying roadway safety standards for sign size, type, location, visibility, clearances, colors, and fonts. The location of each sign/archway will be in a public right-of-way area that does not affect sensitive habitats and/or cultural or historic sites, will not obscure the driver's line of sight, and/or create a safety concern.

Decorative Community Identification Signage Guidelines

DPW will use the existing Community Identification Signage guidelines that are in place when evaluating all sign applications as follows:

- Communities are limited to one ground mounted or street spanning sign at each principal approach to a village area as designated in the County General Plan.
- Signs shall be located entirely within the right-of-way of General Plan Mobility Element roads. This Mobility Element includes County roads that form the backbone of a regional network providing movement within and between communities in the unincorporated area.
- Signs shall provide the name of the community and may include a slogan and/or logo.
- Sign text size shall be legible from a reasonable distance based on prevailing approach speeds.

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- Ground mounted signs shall provide information on one side only. Street spanning signs may provide information on two sides.
- Signs may be illuminated following existing lighting policies and standards.
- Scrolling or variable messages are not allowed.
- Signs shall not provide directions or destinations.
- Signs shall not include sponsorship or advertising of any kind.
- Signs shall not include any photography.
- Signs shall not include landscaping.

Finally, if the Board directs option 3B and/or 3C, the Board needs to provide direction on the geographic area for which these options for a Decorative Community Identification Signage Program would apply.

Option 4A: District 5 unincorporated communities only (as directed by the Board on October 5, 2021).

Option 4B: The Board could direct staff to expand the program to all unincorporated communities in San Diego county. This option requires DPW to conduct additional outreach to unincorporated communities located outside District 5 to provide information about the new decorative community signage program option(s) selected by the Board.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

On January 29, 2014 (7) the Board of Supervisors adopted a Negative Declaration (ND) for the Community Signs and Banners in the Public Right-of-Way – Zoning Ordinance and County Code Amendments. The ND addressed the development of a program and changes to the County Code and Zoning Ordinance to allow signs within the County Road right-of-way. The proposed project does not contain any substantial changes from the project identified in the ND resulting in either significant new environmental impacts not considered in the ND, or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects. In addition, no new information of substantial importance has become available since the ND was adopted. In accordance with California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15162, no subsequent environmental document is required for this project. In accordance with Section 15164(b), no Addendum to the previously adopted MND is required for this project.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed actions support the Equity and Community Initiatives in the County of San Diego's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan with the objectives to advance opportunities for economic growth and development for all individuals and the community. Establishment of a program to allow the installation of community identification signs in the public right-of-way helps fulfill this initiative by providing infrastructure that supports the local economy and is fundamental to a strong, vibrant region.

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY IDENTIFICATION SIGNAGE PROGRAM IN THE PUBLIC
RIGHT-OF-WAY (DISTRICT: 5)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah E. Aghassi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a distinct "Aghassi" at the end.

SARAH E. AGHASSI
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment A – Community Group Input

Attachment B – Action Sheet