



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: April 17, 2012
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Steven Zoet, Director of Community Services
Subject: Proposed Gateway Signage and Landscaping for the Santa Monica Blvd. and Doheny Drive Intersection
Attachments: None

INTRODUCTION

Staff has been working with local architectural firm Gruen Associates to develop concepts for enhancing various gateway locations in an effort to improve the appearance of these identified points of entry into the City. On February 21, Steve Smith from Gruen Associates presented proposed design options to City Council for the Santa Monica and Doheny Drive intersection. These options had previously been presented to liaisons Mayor Brien and Councilmember Gold as well as ad hoc Commission representatives Block and Rosoff. The City Council did not support any of the presented options and asked that additional designs be generated for consideration.

DISCUSSION

City Council has previously identified the installation of gateway signage and landscape improvements at various locations throughout the City as a priority and a way to enhance highly trafficked entrances into the City. Staff of the Public Works Engineering Division is preparing to bid and construct Council's previously approved design for the Wilshire/Whittier gateway. Subsequent to the approval of that project, City Council gave direction to proceed with design concepts for Santa Monica Blvd. and Doheny Drive.

Staff has met with City Council liaisons Brien and Gold and Recreation and Parks Commission (RPC) ad hoc committee members Block and Rosoff on multiple occasions to provide feedback and direction to the design team. As a result of that process, the design team presented several different concepts to City Council on February 21. Direction was given to provide additional concepts with the emphasis being to focus on low-profile signage and complementary landscaping within the island that separates east and westbound traffic movement on Santa Monica Blvd. Mr. Smith presented revised drawings to the RPC at their March 27th meeting that he felt were representative of Council's direction. The Commissioners unanimously endorsed a concept that is inclusive of a water feature and will be presented to Council on the 17th.

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City Council will also be presented with options showing two proposed placement locations for an accompanying Beverly Hills shield sign. Placement options are being proposed either in front of or behind the recommended monument sign. Staff feels that it is important to include these options since it is presumed that placement behind the monument will draw people to that location for photo opportunities. Staff prefers that pedestrians stay in front of the monument sign for their own personal safety as well as to deter possible damage to adjacent landscaping that would likely occur due to trampling. Although not unanimous, a majority of the RPC Commissioners supported placement of the shield in front of the monument sign.

Also being asked of City Council is direction regarding placement of a smaller complementary wall on the north side of Santa Monica Blvd. that would be in general proximity to where the existing shield sign currently exists. The purpose of the proposed secondary wall would be to create the environment that some think is necessary when passing through a gateway concept. As with the placement of the shield, the Commission did not have a unanimous position regarding the need for a complementary wall and supports the decision of City Council on this matter.

As City Council will see upon presentation, efforts are being made to maximize greening opportunities by converting adjacent hardscaped traffic islands that serve as delineators since additional green space was a desired outcome of the project. The design team has been asked to provide cost estimates for the project as a whole and these components in an effort to allow Council to select the desired scope relative to available funds.

FISCAL IMPACT

Gateway enhancements are a funded project (#701) in the CIP budget. At present, approximately \$2.8 million remain in the account. These funds are anticipated to cover costs associated with minor design revision requirements associated with the previously approved Wilshire/Whittier gateway feature and its anticipated construction costs, and also are intended to cover all design and construction costs associated with the proposed option for the Santa Monica/Doheny location. Any unspent funds would be anticipated for use in future gateway projects at the direction of City Council.

RECOMMENDATION

If City Council is prepared to do so, staff asks for direction on the proposed monument signage and landscape options that will be presented to you. The RPC unanimously endorsed the concept that will be presented to City Council and, based on direction previously provided by the liaisons; staff anticipates that it is also reflective of the liaisons' direction as well.

Should the proposed design be approved, staff asks that you provide direction to prepare a new agreement with Gruen Associates to develop the design and construction documents necessary to bid the proposed option. Staff will return with the agreement and will address the cost and anticipated timelines for plan development and project construction which will occur as part of the design development process.



Scott Miller
Finance Approval

Steve Zoet
Approved By

