



MEETING DATE: 4/5/04
ITEM NO. 18

COUNCIL/AGENCY AGENDA REPORT

DATE: March 30, 2004
TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL/
CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
FROM: DEBRA J. FIGONE, TOWN MANAGER/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DOWNTOWN GATEWAY
DESIGN WORKING GROUP AND PROVIDE DIRECTION TO STAFF ON
THE NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS

RECOMMENDATION:

Review recommendations from the Downtown Gateway Design Working Group and provide direction to staff on the next steps in the process.

BACKGROUND:

The Los Gatos Downtown Beautification Improvements is based on a concept plan approved by the Town Council in 1996.

In 1996 the Council/Agency approved the Downtown Beautification Master Plan developed by Landscape Architect Paul Rodrigues of Santa Cruz. The initial implementation phase of the plan occurred in 1997 along the south end of North Santa Cruz Avenue between Main Street and Bean Avenue. The plan envisions new sidewalks using what is referred to as a "Villa Hermosa" style, choked-down intersections to slow traffic and make it easier for pedestrians to cross Santa Cruz Avenue, new raised planter boxes with street trees, new lighting fixtures at crosswalk locations, and new street furniture such as benches, trash receptacles, and bollards.

PREPARED BY: *John E. Curtis*
JOHN E. CURTIS
Director of Parks and Public Works

Reviewed by: RSJ Assistant Town Manager AL Town Attorney Clerk GC Finance
 Community Development Revised: 3/30/04 11:22 am

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On June 5, 2000, the Council/Agency approved a list of capital projects for the Central Los Gatos Redevelopment Project. Identified for Downtown Beautification Improvements were the following projects:

- Santa Cruz Avenue/Bachman Avenue Intersection Improvements
- Grays Lane Improvements
- Town Plaza Renovation
- Main Street/University Avenue Intersection Improvements
- Santa Cruz Avenue/Wood Road Traffic Circle (Gateway)
- Santa Cruz Avenue/Highway 9 Intersection Improvements (Gateway)

Over the past 3 years various beautification improvements have been constructed in the Central Downtown area. This work included the reconstruction of Town Plaza and Santa Cruz Avenue Streetscape Improvements. The streetscape improvements along Main Street and the reconstruction of Santa Cruz Avenue are planned for the next 2 years. The Gateway improvements, however, were not included in the RDA bond funding that was acquired in 2002, as neither this concept nor their design had been established at that time.

As the discussion about the downtown gateways was initiated over a year ago, there has been interest from members of the community on placement of gateways at other points of entry in Town. After much discussion, the Council directed staff to start the work on the development of the downtown gateways at this time and pursue other gateway locations throughout the Town at a future date.

At its meeting of August 8, 2003, the Council appointed an eleven member Working Group to develop designs for the two downtown gateways (1. Wood Road and Santa Cruz Avenue; 2. Highway 9 and Santa Cruz Avenue). Attached is a list of the eleven members that represent a broad cross-section of experience in Los Gatos. It was determined by the Council that this group would focus on the two downtown gateways, and once this process was complete, the Council would consider a process to look at other gateways to the Town.

DISCUSSION:

The Gateway Group began meeting in the Fall of 2003 and completed its third and final meeting in December, 2003. The group was facilitated by Callander Associates (Landscape Architects) who is the landscape architect for the downtown streetscape improvements working under BKF Engineers. Callander Associates has extensive experience in working on gateway design elements and did an excellent job with the group.

The framework for the design of the gateways was the approved 1996 Downtown Streetscape Plan. At the Highway 9 Gateway, this plan conceptually called for the elimination of the "pork chop" islands and creating large bulb outs to allow for additional landscaping, hardscape, and entryway elements.

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At the Wood Road Gateway, an approval of an expansion to the Toll House Hotel in the late 1990's called for a traffic circle with other gateway elements.

Callander Associates provided the group with examples of gateways from other cities and ideas that might reflect the unique nature of Los Gatos at these key locations. The group, with facilitation by Callander Associates, then worked to come up with concepts for each of the gateways. Callander Associates subsequently developed the conceptual designs and generated costs estimates. The final concept design as recommended by the gateway group is as follows:

Santa Cruz Avenue/HWY 9 intersection: The "pork chop" islands would be removed and new decorative sidewalks will be constructed at the 4 corners of the intersection. In addition to the new sidewalks, landscaping treatment and metal railings would be installed in the space behind new sidewalks to accent the entryway into Santa Cruz Avenue. This project would also require installation of a new traffic signal at this intersection. These intersection modifications are better undertaken after other project work, such as when the undergrounding of overhead power lines on Highway 9 is completed. It is also important to coordinate the timing of this project with adjacent projects, as its location causes it to be of a high impact on the surrounding area during construction.

Santa Cruz Avenue/Wood Road intersection: The main feature of this gateway is installation of a traffic circle on Santa Cruz Avenue at Wood Road. There would be a heritage tree planted in the middle of this traffic circle with decorative landscaping and lighting surrounding the tree. Median islands would be installed on Santa Cruz Avenue north and south of this traffic circle which is intended to narrow down the road way and slow down the traffic from HYW 17. Decorative sidewalks and landscaping would also be installed on Wood Road to facilitate between pedestrian movements. This project provides less impact on the surrounding area during construction. Traffic will be able to flow through the intersection with only minor delays while construction is underway.

Attachment 2 shows the outlines of the recommended design concepts.

A representative from Callander Associates will present the designs to the Town Council along with the preliminary cost estimates as well as answer questions that the Council may have.

CONCLUSION:

Following review of the conceptual designs by the Council, the Council may wish to:

1. Accept the designs in concept and request that the next step for staff is to develop a strategy for funding the construction of the gateways. No additional design work (either conceptual or construction documents) would be undertaken until a funding strategy is approved. Fine tuning of the conceptual design would take place at a later date.

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2. Direct the consultant to make specific revisions to the conceptual designs based on input from the Council. These changes would then be made and would come back to Council for approval prior to developing a funding strategy.
3. Provide other direction either regarding the design concept or project funding allocation.

Staff would like to express its appreciation to the Gateway Design Working Group members for volunteering their time to develop the conceptual design of these gateways.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

Is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no funds allocated at the present time for the downtown gateways. The construction cost estimate for the Santa Cruz Avenue / Wood Road Gateway is \$600,000 and for Santa Cruz Avenue / Highway 9 Gateway is \$1,100,000. A potential source of funds is the Redevelopment Agency through a new bond issue, or through funds that may be leftover from current bonds. The General Fund is another source, if funds are available. Additional possibilities include grant funding, as available for traffic calming projects, and the borrowing of Town funds by the RDA. Borrowing, however, can only be undertaken if the RDA has the capacity to repay loans to bond holders or the General Fund.

Attachments

1. List of Gateway Working Group Members
2. Gateway Preferred Plans

Distribution:

Gateway Design Working Group

Callandar Associates, 311 Seventh Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94401

BKF Engineers, 981 Ridder Park Drive, Suite 200, San Jose, CA 95131-2305

Los Gatos Chamber of Commerce, 349 North Santa Cruz Avenue, Los Gatos, CA 95030

DOWNTOWN GATEWAY DESIGN WORKING GROUP

APPLICANT	EXPERIENCE/CIVIC INVOLVEMENT
Karen Hebert	2002/03 Leadership Los Gatos
Tim Boyd	Leadership Los Gatos
Judy Wallace	Fund raising for High School, Museum house tour, Junior League of San Jose
Shirley Henderson	Beautification Committee, Banner Committee, Transportation and Parking Commission
Chris Miller	Leadership Los Gatos
Tim Hoagland	L.G. Blvd. Design Charette, Fiesta De Arts
Jade Bradbury-Kalogeros	Museum Association, Community producer for KCAT
Leonard Pacheco	Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Committee, Art Selection Committee
Brent Ventura	Planning Commission, Town Council
Sandy Moeckel	Retired Citizen
Bill Parkin	Docent at L.G. Historic Homes Tour, St. Mary's Social Justice Committee

TOWN OF LOS GATOS DOWNTOWN GATEWAY STUDY

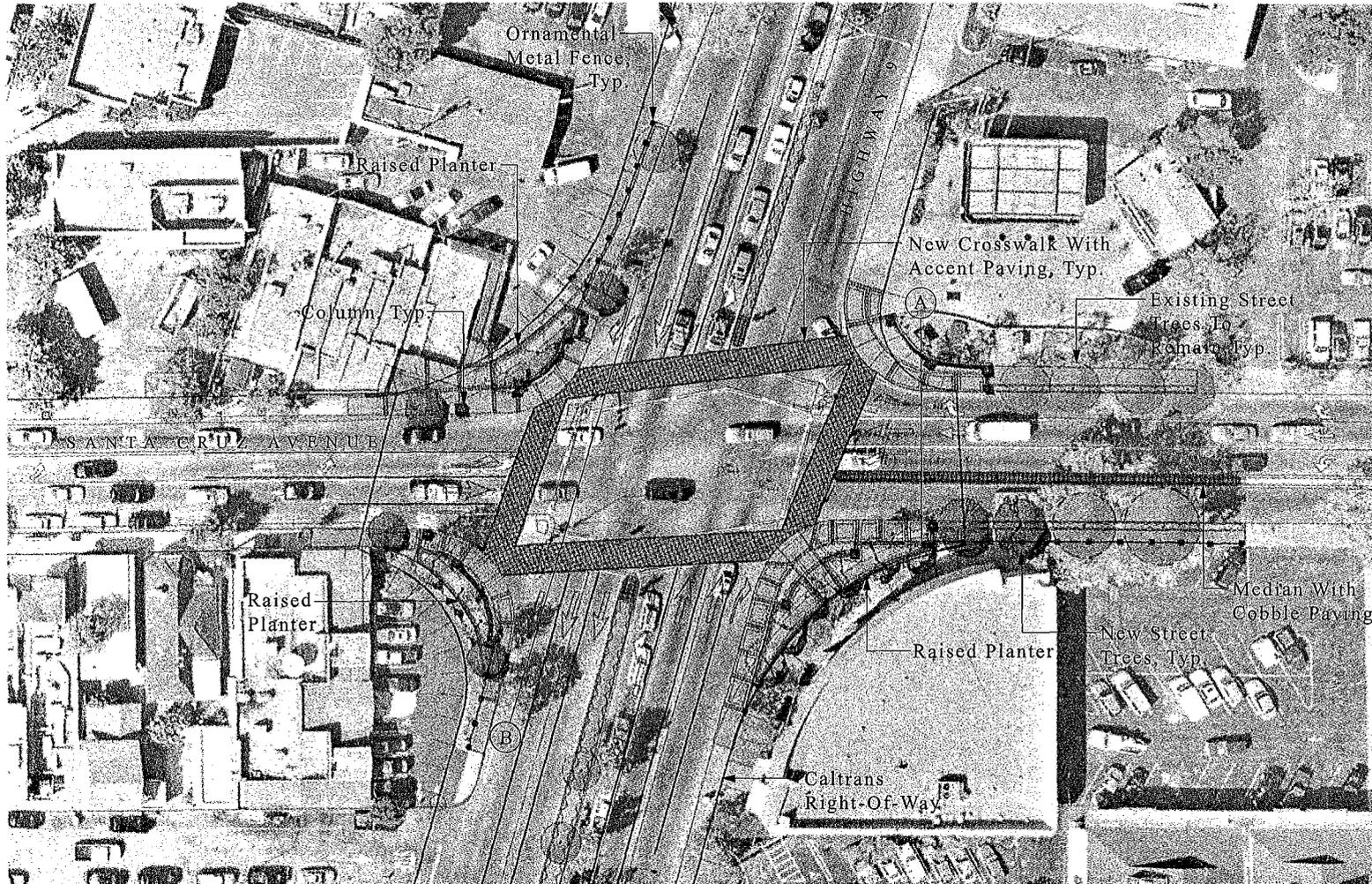


Preferred Plan Wood Road Gateway

November 14, 2003



TOWN OF LOS GATOS DOWNTOWN GATEWAY STUDY



Preferred Plan
Highway 9 Gateway

November 14, 2003



