

TO: TOWN COUNCIL

FROM: TOWN MANAGER

RE: DOWNTOWN AND FREEWAY SIGNS

### **ISSUE**

Decide if downtown and freeway signs are needed.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Hear Council Member Ucovich's ideas on downtown and freeway signs and give direction as to how Council wishes to proceed.

### **CEQA**

There are no CEQA issues in discussing signs however once a project is determined (sign types, sizes and placements) there would need to be environmental clearance.

### **MONEY**

At present it is unknown what the types and sizes of signs might be, where they would be placed (right of way = no cost, private land could involve lease costs) and installation methods (temporary, permanent).

### **DISCUSSION**

Council agreed at the December meeting to hear Council Member Ucovich's request to consider installing downtown and freeway signs. Mr Ucovich has advocated the following signs:

- along I-80 prior to the Horseshoe Bar off ramp indicating shopping opportunities in Loomis and indicating the direction to downtown Loomis
- freeway signs (presently not allowed by CalTrans for Town's the size of Loomis or greater) indicating specific businesses (Starbucks, Raleys, Burger King etc) at the Loomis exit
- signs in the downtown indicating directions to various businesses.

It is unknown at this writing what the various signs would look like, sizes or where they would be placed.

On May 20, 2009 a sub-committee of business owners (Scott Paris, Charlene Reynolds, Vic Markey, and Tom Baker) met with then Mayor Scherer, Vice Mayor Liss, the Planning

Director and me to discuss sign issues, specifically key entry signs and some interior directional signs. An idea of painting a big map on the wall of a downtown building (no particular building mentioned) was noted after the meeting. Key entry areas for signs were noted as follows:

- Sierra College Boulevard and Taylor Rd.
- King Rd. and Taylor
- Horseshoe Bar Rd. and I-80
- King and Sierra College Boulevard
- Sierra College Boulevard near Ridge Park Drive.
- The Loomis Depot Building Park
- Sierra College Boulevard at the town limits

It was suggested that the Town retain the services of Michael Murphy, an architect out of Auburn, who has done sign designs for a number of towns. Mr. Paris was going to coordinate with Mr. Murphy and obtain some sign examples. The cost was expected to be \$500. The idea never got off the ground, no sign examples were prepared and no money was spent.

On December 7, 2009 during discussions on using the former Loomis Market Place property for horse rescue operations, Council Member Ucovich presented the attached letter to Colliers Commercial Broker, Steve Chamberlain, representing the Bank of the West who currently controls the property. At this writing there is nothing to report from the Bank on this letter request. Mr Chamberlain indicated at the meeting that a drawing of what is being proposed, where the sign would be located and for how long would be helpful for the Bank to consider the request.

Following is an explanation and attached are pictures from research that Mayor Liss and Council Member Ucovich did along the freeway to identify existing signs and show a location where another sign might be installed.

#### EMAIL DATED 12/29/09 FROM MAYOR TO TOWN MANAGER

Perry,

Miguel and I went out on I-80 today to look at where he would like to put a billboard, what size he had in mind, and to talk through some of the details.

Attached are some of the pictures I took today, that show the progression of signs along I-80 from Sierra College Blvd. traveling East until the HSB exit (and 1 of the sign that Penryn got CalTrans to post listing businesses at the Penryn Avenue intersection. The signs are presented in the order in which they appear along this route. The last photo is of the potential site that Miguel is thinking of, by the Oak tree that is prominently displayed in the foreground. This is situated far enough away from the HSB Road exit so that

it appears that it could work out OK if we don't get too wordy.

Miguel said he would like to get a sign like the PacWest Trailer sign. I called PacWest and found that their sign is 8' x 16'.

Miguel suggested wording like:

"DISCOVER LOOMIS

Next Exit:

- Dining
- Shopping
- Fruit Sheds"

He agrees that it should be simple and not be too cluttered, so that it's readable travelling at 65-75 mph on I-80. We also discussed other words like "Explore, Enjoy or Visit" instead of Discover.

We also discussed the Park N Ride sign, noting that it only has a knife and fork on it. We thought it would be good to have additional info on that sign. He wasn't sure if we could get a symbol for "Tourist Info", but that would be good if we could. Evidently, when the Chamber Office was sited near Raley's, part of the intent was to use that as a Welcome Center to attract people wanting more info about the area.

We agreed the next steps should be to come up with a mock-up of what the Town would like, then try to get the bank OK, then CalTrans OK (to comply with any regs they have governing billboards within so many feet of their ROW. I suggested using a Fruit Label design, although we both agreed that could get too confusing if it wasn't done right. You might want to see if Jim Ingram has any ideas he's willing to share about that. Could you include these pictures and the above info into your staff report for January's Council meeting?

*Gary Liss*  
Mayor

## **CONCLUSION**

At this point Council is asked to provide direction how it wishes to proceed before time and money are spent on this endeavor.