



CITY OF BANNING STAFF REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Douglas Schulze, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Nate Smith, Public Works Deputy Director

MEETING DATE: December 12, 2023

SUBJECT: Consideration of Resolution 2023-194, Adopting the Downtown Revitalization and Complete Streets Plan, Prepared by Alta Planning + Design, Inc., as a Set of Policies and Design Guidelines for the Downtown Area

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution 2023-194.

BACKGROUND:

Award of Consultant Contract

On June 22, 2021, the City of Banning was awarded a \$297,461 Sustainable Communities Grant (SB-1 Grant) from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to retain the services of an experienced and qualified transportation planning and engineering consultant to develop the Downtown Revitalization and Complete Streets (DRCS) Plan. The DRCS is a planning document focused on the revitalization of the downtown area of Banning along with a Complete Streets Plan in the ½ mile project corridor on Ramsey Street, and bounded by: Hays Street (north limit), Livingston Street (south limit), Martin Street (east limit) and 8th Street (west limit), as shown in Attachment 3.

On August 24, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution 2021-78, authorizing the City Manager to enter into an Agreement with Caltrans for the SB-1 Grant for the DRCS Plan. Local match funds in the amount of \$38,539 were required and paid through Engineering Division staff time to manage, review, and approve the project and administer the Caltrans grant. Alta Planning + Design, Inc. was awarded the consultant contract through the approval of Resolution 2022-70 on June 14, 2022.

Complete Streets

Complete Streets are for everyone. Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets that enable safe access for all people who use them, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. The project scope included considering the following factors:

- Roadway reconfiguration/traffic circulation change (reduction of traffic lanes, reduction of parking, etc.)
- Traffic signal improvements (accessible signals and pushbuttons, transit signal priority, queue jump signal, signal coordination, elimination of permissive left turns, pedestrian “all green” phases, protected bicycle phases and other signal timing/phasing by modal priority, etc.)
- Shared streets (vehicle access restriction, raised street with pavers, bollards, etc.)
- Intersection improvements (signal phasing, signs and markings, vehicle turn movement restrictions)

- Streetscape improvements (street lighting, landscape planting, public art, bicycle parking corrals, district and store signage, gateway signage, wayfinding signage, etc.)
- Bicycle lane improvements
- Transit- only lanes (red pavement markings, signal modifications, etc.)
- Bus stop improvements (ADA access improvements, longer bus stops, transit shelters, trash cans, bicycle parking, wayfinding signage, etc.)
- Pedestrian crossing improvements (crosswalk markings, flashing beacons, signals, curb extension “bulbouts”, etc.)
- Parking zones (flexible, based on time of day, parking zones, hybrid paid commercial yellow loading zones, disabled blue parking zones, passenger white loading zones for private vehicles/ride-hailing, taxis, etc.)
- E-Commerce zones for deliveries, perhaps flexible timing
- Traffic calming (speed bumps and/or tables, raised intersections, sidewalk “bulbouts”, etc.)
- Storm water management and greening elements were incorporated.

Revitalization Plan

To compliment the Complete Streets analysis, the DRCS Plan looked at the existing conditions and assets in the downtown corridor, and in coordination with project stakeholders and local property and business owners, developed a framework for downtown that included the following topics:

- Zoning Recommendations
- Parking Recommendations
- Signage Programs
- Economic Data
- Alley reuse/activation
- Event space

Stakeholder Participation

To create a successful DRCS Plan, the project team made meaningful connections with community members to ensure the DRCS Plan is relevant and impactful in their daily lives. The consultant prepared a Community Engagement Action Plan which was approved and implemented in order to provide outreach activities that included public participation and participation from key stakeholders to ensure the Plan’s concepts reflect the community’s needs and wishes. The outreach activities engaged local and regional representatives, and provided presentations covering the project background, goals, scope, preliminary and three preferred concepts, and obtained valuable feedback that led to the final selected alternative in the Plan.

Previous activities included community pop-ups at Banning High School, Nicolet Middle School, and Central Elementary School; ‘engagement days’ covering presentations to downtown business owners including a walking audit, stakeholder’s meetings, public Open House workshops, the Sun Lakes Country Club HOA, and at a Chamber of Commerce breakfast meeting, were held. Additionally, this project was advertised on social media, the City’s website and at community events hosted by the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) project team. Two online surveys were conducted to gather initial information and solicit important feedback.

The design team solicited feedback on three (3) project alternatives to identify preferences on the concepts presented to assist in the development of the final recommendations. Comments were incorporated from City staff members, the public, stakeholders, and the downtown business community to develop the final DRCS Plan. Three alternatives were presented to the Planning Commission on June 7, 2023 and City Council on June 27, 2023 to assist and provide feedback in the preparation of the final DRCS Plan. The final DRCS Plan is a roadmap for future implementation, containing a list of projects, cost estimates and potential grant opportunities. The results of the Community Outreach efforts are presented in detail in the Appendix to the DRCS Plan, Attachment 2.

Final Plan

The final plan reflects input provided throughout the community feedback phases, and takes the best concepts from each of the 3 project alternatives provided. Highlights included in the final plan include the following:

- Transformation of Ramsey Street into a Complete Street, incorporating; wider sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians, outdoor dining, street vendors, event queuing; Class 2 and Class 4 bike lanes; dedicated and enhanced transit stops; loading and unloading flex spaces for business deliveries, on-demand rideshare and food pickup; pedestrian level lighting; enhanced wayfinding and public artwork spaces.
- Narrowed roadways to discourage large vehicles and high speeds.
- Chicane on Ramsey Street for passive traffic calming treatments.
- Enhanced landscaping and storm water capture and treatment.
- Activated alleyways to connect parking to businesses and residences, enhance business operations, provide additional off-street gathering areas.
- Creating 1st Street as a flexible road by; elevating sidewalks to denote special status; allowing for parking and through access for primary business functions; ability to close off for special events and to create event space; enhanced landscape and hardscape architecture.
- Proposing consolidated solid waste management to eliminate individual waste collection bins in the alleys.
- Relocating the truck route from Ramsey Street to Livingston Street, around the downtown core.
- Proposing increased usage of underutilized space.
- Proposing a community pocket park.
- Providing a financial analysis of the downtown area and community for use in recruiting new businesses to downtown.
- Proposing enhanced community signage on Interstate 10.
- Providing a toolkit for the implementation of a demonstration project.
- Providing color/theme templates for wayfinding, including wayfinding and signage for transit and public parking.
- Provide a basis for the desired type of development within the downtown study area.

Implementation

Adoption of the DRCS Plan will allow the City in efforts to attract new business interests and to assist in obtaining grants for construction work within the public right of way. Additionally, the DRCS Plan will be referenced within the ongoing General Plan update allowing the City to use it for new developments and re-developments of parcels within the downtown zone. At Council's direction, roadway standards within this plan can be expanded outside the study zone (i.e. Ramsey Street from Martin Street to Aloha Street).

The Public Works Department intends to seek grant funding to implement the improvements within the downtown plan, likely in a phased approach as funding allows. This process may take several years to come to fruition.

JUSTIFICATION:

This plan will help to provide City Staff, the community, existing business owners, and potential investors in downtown a shared vision to work towards implementing. It also will provide design goals and guidelines for the downtown area. The approval of Resolution 2023-194 by City Council is required in order to competitively apply for Federal and State grants, with the goal of receiving funds to implement portions of the DRCS Plan over time.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This project was funded from a SB-1 grant provided from Caltrans that was previously accepted by Council on June 22, 2021. The City's financial commitment is being met by utilization of staff time with Engineering Division staff administering the grant in house. Adoption of the resolution does not make any additional financial obligations to the City at this time.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Adopt Resolution 2023-194, as recommended.
2. Adopt Resolution 2023-194, with modifications. City Council may request staff to make revisions to the DRCS Plan.
3. Do not adopt Resolution 2023-194. Without approval of DRCS Plan, the City would be ineligible for grant opportunities that requires such approval.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [Resolution 2023-194, Downtown Plan.docx](#)
2. [Exhibit A - Part 1, DRCS Final Plan, 11.2023.pdf](#)
3. [Exhibit A - Part Two, DRCS Appendix, 11.2023.pdf](#)
4. [Project Location Map.pdf](#)