



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Communications Department

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CITY OF SAN DIEGO PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECEIVES TWO 2015 AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE FROM THE STATE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

SAN DIEGO – The San Diego Planning Department is pleased to announce that it has received two 2015 Awards of Excellence from the American Planning Association. The 2015 Innovation in Green Community Planning was awarded for the City Heights Urban Greening Plan and the 2015 Hard-Won Victories Award of Excellence was awarded for the Barrio Logan Community Identification Sign. Both awards will be given at the annual State APA conference, which will be held in Oakland California in October 2015.

“We are honored that the American Planning Association is recognizing both projects with these prestigious awards, said Tom Tomlinson, Interim Planning Department Director. “Planning Department staff worked closely with their respective communities to address their concerns and develop creative, cost effective solutions.”

About the City Heights Urban Greening Plan, Winner of the 2015 Innovation in Green Community Planning Award

The City Heights Urban Greening Plan, through an extensive community engagement effort, establishes a green strategy framework for City Heights, which incorporates four design elements: urban runoff, urban open space, multi-modal connectivity, and urban forestry. The strategies identified within these elements connect community destinations through enhanced street design. The urban forestry element includes a Street Tree Master Plan that can help promote efforts to combat climate change through carbon sequestration, improvements to the pedestrian environment, and reduction of the community’s urban heat island.

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Ten pilot projects that identify conceptual design improvements at key locations within the community have been identified through the public participation process. These projects were selected to highlight key community connections, with the potential of leveraging other community efforts through the implementation process. The plan consolidates relevant information and recommendations from previous plans for each project and provides planning-level cost estimates to help determine prioritization and implementation opportunities.

The City Heights Street Tree Plan is designed to provide an optimum range of tree species that have been selected to reinforce community character. It considers the existing tree species in City Heights in conjunction with the City's Street Tree Selection Guide and is intended to be used to facilitate the species selection based on a review of tree size at maturity, as well as physical characteristics.

About the *Barrio Logan Gateway Sign*, Winner of the 2015 Hard-Won Victories Award of Excellence

The Barrio Logan Gateway Sign is located along Cesar Chavez Parkway within the community of Barrio Logan between Main Street and Newton Avenue adjacent to the recently built Mercado project. The genesis of this sign was to address illegal use of Cesar Chavez parkway by trucks weighing over 5-tons while creating a context-sensitive symbolic entry to the community that captured the unique spirit of Barrio Logan.

In 2008, the Port of San Diego, in partnership with SANDAG and Caltrans, embarked on the Port Freeway Access Project (PFAP) with the intent of addressing the issue of large semi-trucks bisecting the community to get to and from the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal. The initial concept proposed in 2008 was the construction of a two-lane, 60-foot tall grade separated structure from the western side of Cesar Chavez Parkway over the railroad tracks that would turn right onto Harbor Drive, just before the on-ramp to the Coronado Bay Bridge. The proposed grade separation improvement would have provided dedicated truck access from the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal gates onto the dedicated truck route and to the freeways. This project was intended to deter trucks from going through the Barrio Logan community and eliminate

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delays caused by the railroad crossing. However, it was extremely expensive and the significant visual impact by such a large bridge would have been detrimental to the community of Barrio Logan.

City planning staff instead engaged the PFAP team and requested that a context-sensitive design be considered that included a community sign spanning Cesar Chavez Parkway as well as other street improvements including crosswalk enhancements, lane adjustments and beautification improvements in the community near the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal. Numerous individuals in the community had raised the idea of a gateway sign during the many workshops and meetings held for the Barrio Logan Community Plan update process that started in 2007.

Through the PFAP team meetings, a local landscape architect, Estrada Land Planning, was hired to facilitate community workshops to provide input on the sign's design. Many community stakeholders attended the workshops and a number of well known Chicano artists stepped up to assist with the design. The community meetings resulted in extensive community input reflecting "what the Barrio is all about." The landscape architect took that information and created several alternatives. After selecting a preferred alternative, the landscape architect continued to work with community artists incorporating those ideas into the final design of the structure.

The gateway sign was installed in the Fall of 2014 and has become an iconic gateway for the community of Barrio Logan that has also effectively deterred large 5-ton semi trucks from using Cesar Chavez Parkway to access the freeways.

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