



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: JULY 2, 2014 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

SUBJECT: REVIEW PROPOSED BRANDING CONCEPTS FOR DOWNTOWN AND UPTOWN TROLLEY AND PROVIDE DIRECTION TO STAFF AND CONSULTANT

FROM: David H. Ready, City Manager

BY: Community & Economic Development Department

SUMMARY

In 2013, the City Council directed City staff to investigate the feasibility of a trolley that would serve the Downtown and Uptown areas as well as connect several of the larger hotels outside Downtown to the center of town. Staff, working with a City Council Sub-Committee (Foat/Lewin) and an ad hoc Stakeholder Trolley Committee, completed its investigation and discussed a number of issues with City Council in November, 2013.

The City hired Symblaze, a marketing/branding firm, to assist in developing the brand concept and imagery for the proposed trolley. The firm did similar work in West Hollywood with the very successful WeHo Pickup.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Provide direction to consultant on the branding and imagery for the Downtown Trolley.
2. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to execute all necessary documents.

Background

On November 20, 2013, staff presented City Council with initial findings on the feasibility of an intra-city trolley program to serve the Downtown and Uptown Design District areas, as well as connect several of the larger outlying areas. Staff, working with the City Council Sub-Committee (Foat/Lewin) and an ad hoc Stakeholder Trolley Committee (hotel general managers and other stakeholders), investigated a number of

trolley programs in other cities to determine what was successful and what might be replicated in Palm Springs.


A contract for the operation of the trolley with MV Transportation was approved by the City Council at its June 18, 2014 meeting. The City's branding consultant, Symbblaze, was engaged by a separate contract and has been working with the Stakeholder group and the Council subcommittee on developing branding concepts. Branding work began in the fall with a series of "discovery" meetings with groups of stakeholders (hoteliers, downtown merchants, neighborhoods). After those meetings, there were two areas where the consultant held additional meetings to get more information:

- **TARGET AUDIENCE.** Identifying the different segments (tourists, residents, etc.), and looking deeper into each segment to understand tastes and expectations.
- **CREATIVE.** The consultant also received feedback around the brand's general direction—what the community would want to see for the mood, the vibe, the tonality, the colors, and the general feel of the trolley.


In May, the consultant met with the City project team and a smaller group of stakeholder group representatives, including a representative from each of the above groups (hoteliers, downtown merchants, neighborhood organizations). The feedback from this group helped develop a sense of the types of brands and names that could be appropriate and exciting.

The consultant presented a total of 25 names and tags to the Council Subcommittee and larger stakeholder group on June 19, 2014. The expanded group of names was broken down into smaller categories, such as "retro-cool," "playful," "simple," and others. Through discussion in the meeting and a voting mechanism available after the meeting, the names were reduced down to about four, to be presented to City Council at the July 2 meeting for selection.

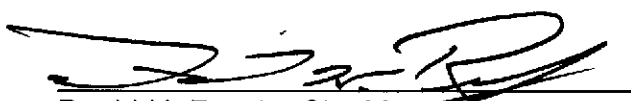
The brand will drive how the trolley is marketed through brochures, social media, and other promotions. It will also affect the look and feel of the trolley: each vehicle will be "wrapped" with the brand graphics, which the operator will produce in coordination with the Art Director from Symbblaze.



John S. Raymond, Director of
Community & Economic Development



Diana Shay, Redevelopment
Coordinator



David H. Ready, City Manager

Attachments: Trolley Names and Branding Concepts (to be provided)