DOWNTOWN COCOA BEACH
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
CITY OF COCOA BEACH, FLORIDA

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA
WAYFINDING MASTER PLAN - DRAFT

OCTOBER, 2012

LAND DESIGN SOUTH
Planning | Landscape Architecture | Environmental | Transportation | Graphic Design
919 Lake Baldwin Lane | Orlando | Florida 32814 | (407) 233-1367
www.LandDesignSouth.com
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CITY OF COCOA BEACH MAYOR, VICE MAYOR & COMMISSIONERS
Mayor: Leon "Skip" Beeler
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Commissioner Kevin Pruett
Commissioner Dave Netterstrom

CITY STAFF
City Manager: Chuck Billias
City Attorney: Fowler, O’Quinn, Feeney & Sneed, P.A.
CRA Executive Director: Anthony Caravella, AICP,
Director of Development Services
CRA Registered Agent: Loredana Kalaghchyan, City Clerk
City Engineer: John Adair, P.E.
City Planner: Daniel Connor, AICP
Administrative Assistant: Janice Brady
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SECTION 1

OVERVIEW
SECTION 1.1 - INTRODUCTION

"As a key element of the Downtown Redevelopment Master Plan, a comprehensive wayfinding signage plan will facilitate navigation for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists."

Destination Guidance Signage or Wayfinding is a graphical means to assist visitors attempting to make their way through an unfamiliar environment. When the information needed to access that environment is provided in a coordinated fashion, the unfamiliar quickly becomes comfortable, friendly and welcoming. A successful wayfinding system manages this experience, using signage as a communication tool to not only facilitate access, but also to reflect the civic culture and complement the environment of its setting.

Wayfinding signage provides visitors a convenient means for locating destinations such as parking, government offices, beach access points and businesses; it provides for enhanced vehicular and pedestrian safety by eliminating confusion; and it reduces visual blight caused by inconsistent, poorly conceived and constructed signage.

The scope of this study is to prepare a wayfinding Master Plan which provides for safe, efficient and aesthetically appealing means of navigation to and within the boundary of the Downtown Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) and to provide a template for future sign design, placement and construction. As a key element of the Downtown Redevelopment Master Plan, a comprehensive wayfinding signage plan will facilitate navigation for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
SECTION 1.2 - REGULATORY LIMITATIONS ON SIGNAGE

"The controlling guidelines for Atlantic Ave. and Orlando Ave. include the FDOT Plans Preparation Manual (PPM), Design Standards and the FHWA Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTDC)."

The two primary north-south throughfares (Atlantic Ave. and Orlando Ave.) are part of the State Highway System and therefore signage located within these rights-of-way are subject to Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations. The controlling guidelines for Atlantic Ave. and Orlando Ave. include the FDOT Plans Preparation Manual (PPM), Design Standards and the FHWA Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTDC). Signage located on the east/west local roadways is subject to The City of Cocoa Beach regulations. It should also be noted that for projects funded with Federal dollars, adherence to the MUTDC, regardless of which right-of-way the sign is located in, will be subject to the FDOT Design Standards and the MUTDC.

The FHWA prohibits the use of different color sign backgrounds to provide color-coding of destinations and requires that the color-coding shall be accomplished by the use of different colored square or rectangular panels on the face of the guide signs. On June 23, 2006, the FDOT received approval for an FHWA Request to Experiment to perform an "Evaluation Study on Wayfinding Signs for the State of Florida." Florida’s approved wayfinding standards allow the use of different color backgrounds, which is currently different from Section 2D.03 of the MUTCD. Therefore, FDOT must receive approval from the FHWA prior to any sign installations. This request to experiment will be handled through the State Traffic Engineering and Operations.

In addition to the above, the location and clearance characteristics of all signage is regulated by the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). These regulations have been applied to all recommendations contained in this document.
SECTION 1.3 - BRANDING

Wayfinding is one of the elements which reinforces a city’s brand. City branding refers to all the activities that are undertaken with the purpose of turning a City from a location into a destination. “Successful branding”, says Robert Jones, consultant director at international brand consultancy Wolff Olins, “can turn a city into a place where people want to live, work and visit”. [Guardian.co.uk. 2008-10-01]

According to Duane Knapp, founder and chairman of BrandStrategy, Inc., author of The BrandPromise, and Brand Advisor to the Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), “A BrandPromise Commitment connects deeply with the consumer and defines the destination, not in terms of function or purpose, but its ability to offer a meaningful experience that is unique and enhances the quality of a visitor’s life in some way.”

In order to achieve successful redevelopment, the City of Cocoa Beach must present a competitive advantage above it’s local, regional, national and international competitors. There is no shortage of communities trying to achieve the same objective as that of the CRA. This heightened competitive environment makes it important for places, no matter their size or composition, to clearly differentiate themselves and to convey why they are relevant and valued options.

While not an end in and of itself, the Wayfinding Plan is intended to support the vision established by the adopted Redevelopment Plan and should help to support and clarify the Cocoa Beach brand. The Vision Plan states:

“The Downtown Cocoa Beach CRA is in a strong position to implement the plans for redevelopment. The key question is: how can Downtown create a stronger identity and image which capitalizes on its history as the birthplace of the space program, its current draw for surfing and ecotourism, and residential community without compromising the resident’s quality of life?”

To that end, the products of this study will take their cues from these cultural aspects identified in the Redevelopment plan: space exploration, surfing, and nature.

Consistent signage, a key element to the plan, will not only provide direction, but will unify the uses throughout the Downtown Redevelopment Area further enhancing the community identity. Creative, coordinated and consistent signage leads to a safe, efficient navigation system which minimizes confusion and visually supports the unique cultural aspects associated with Cocoa Beach. Conversely, uncoordinated and inconsistent signage leads to navigational confusion and visual blight detracting from the aesthetic appeal of the CRA.
"The Downtown Community Redevelopment Area's ultimate goal is to "arrest those blighting conditions, promote economic development, allow for sound growth and development."

The City of Cocoa Beach Downtown Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) has been designated in accordance with State Statute Section 163 Part III. The finding of necessity for the CRA includes defining deficiencies or conditions of blight. The Downtown Community Redevelopment Area's ultimate goal is to "arrest those blighting conditions, promote economic development, allow for sound growth and development."

To arrest blight, the City of Cocoa Beach adopted the Downtown Cocoa Beach Redevelopment Plan which identifies wayfinding signage as a tool to support and enhance redevelopment in the downtown area.

In its current state, signage adds to unsafe conditions of vehicular and pedestrian travel and contributes to visual blight. Correcting these deficiencies will serve to promote redevelopment and reverse blighted conditions within the redevelopment area.
"The Wayfinding plan should be developed to support the concept of Neighborhood Districts."

The Downtown Cocoa Beach Redevelopment Plan identifies the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) as a series of Neighborhood districts each with unique characteristics of land development and correspondingly, identities. The Wayfinding plan should be developed to support the concept of Neighborhood Districts. People like to identify with the unique characteristics of their surroundings. It has been demonstrated that land values within clearly identifiable districts tend to be higher than those of undefined areas. It is also true that community pride and the associated benefits of public policing, litter abatement and public participation in civic events increases within neighborhoods with a strong identity. A good local example of this type of neighborhood "branding" can be evidenced within the Cottage Row neighborhood—especially in the Cottage Row Conservation area.
SECTION 2.1 - DOWNTOWN DESTINATIONS

"Efficient navigation to desired destinations within the CRA is a key component of successful redevelopment."

Navigation to and within the Downtown Redevelopment Area is based on destinations which draw visitors to the community. Efficient navigation to desired destinations within the CRA is a key component of successful redevelopment.

The scope of this study is to identify the civic, cultural, and recreational destinations within and around the CRA and devise a simple, effective means of navigating to them. The aerial map to follow identifies those destinations together with the neighborhood districts established by the Downtown Cocoa Beach Redevelopment Plan.
"Identifying the issues which create a confusing and aestically unappealing environment is instrumental to the wayfinding planning process."

Existing signage within the CRA is comprised of a broad range of directional, informational, highway guide and identity signage.

Identifying the issues which create a confusing and aestically unappealing environment is instrumental to the wayfinding planning process.

Much of this signage has been installed over a prolonged period and presents a "layered" effect where style, location and construction techniques vary considerably. Many of the signs are in poor condition. In addition, business who by necessity require identity signage compete for location with highway guide signage. The following photo inventory identifies issues which contribute to a confusing and aesthetically unappealing environment.

Business signs compete with public parking signs.

This parking lot has inconsistent parking signage designs.

City Hall is one example of Inconsistent Identification signage designs.
In some instances, new signage is added and the old sign left standing or two signs exist which provide the same or slightly different information. When there are too many signs, visitors suffer from information overload. Signs compete for attention, become less helpful to navigation, and create visual blight. One example is the Minutemen Causeway beach entrance. There are more than 25 signs of varying sizes, shapes, and colors located within a 30 ft. radius of this primary beach entry location.

Some of the many signs located at the Minutemen Causeway beach entrance.

Unnecessary signs can draw away the attention of passers by from more important signage.

"Temporary" signage has a tendency to become a permanent fixture and these signs contribute to visual blight.
Entry identification signage for the CRA includes the improvements located within the triangle park at the north end of the CRA and a new "temporary" CRA sign located at the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Orlando Avenue.

The signage located in the triangle park at the north end of the CRA is comprised of flags, a fountain structure, the Kelly Slater "Surfer" statue and the inscribed coquina sign which reads "Welcome to Downtown Cocoa Beach". These structures are all high quality icons which represent the culture of Cocoa Beach. However, much of the welcome sign is screened from the view of approaching vehicles by landscape plantings. These signs compete with each other for attention at a location which is also a key location for automobile drivers to make critical navigation decisions creating an unsafe driving condition.

The signage located at the south end of the downtown core district is comprised of a temporary sign which utilizes the CRA logo to signify entry.

CRA logo sign at the south end of the downtown core district.
The iconic Kelly Slater "Surfer" statue located at the north end of the CRA.
Welcome to Downtown Cocoa Beach coquina sign with the fountain in the background.
SECTION 2.4 - BEACH ACCESS SIGNAGE

There are 4 public beach access points on the “stub end” cross streets throughout the downtown redevelopment area which provide parking and a 5th beach access point at Minutemen Causeway which does not have public parking. No signs exist today that identify the location of the beach access points in the downtown area and no signs exist indicating public parking.

Beach visitation is a primary draw for visitors to Cocoa Beach. The addition of beach access and beach parking signs would increase the beachgoers use of the downtown beaches while at the same time increase commerce throughout the downtown. Additionally, it is recommended that vehicular travel into the Minutemen "Plaza" be discouraged. Signage should be designed accordingly.

Brevard County has beach access signs throughout other areas of the city and county. On the other hand, Cocoa Beach does not identify any of its primary beach access points within the CRA.
SECTION 2.5 - PARKING SIGNAGE

"Parking is a critical component of the CRA both in terms of the opportunities as well as the challenges it presents."

Public Parking
The City has recently initiated a parking directional signage program to assist visitors with the location of surface parking lots and metered on-street parking. Parking is a critical component of the CRA both in terms of the opportunities as well as the challenges it presents. Parking within the CRA is comprised of on-street parking and public and private surface parking lots. All are critical components for providing convenient access to businesses, civic institutions and the beach.

Public parking signage is inconsistent in its design and location often sharing with other signs leading to a confusing presentation. Public parking signs are also often screened from view or compete with business identification signs.

Inconsistent design - too much information at a critical decision point for a driver entering the parking lot.

Public parking signage is inconsistent in design and location, and often provides conflicting information.
Private Parking

Private parking is also available for patrons of specific businesses and for visiting beachgoers. This creates the need for additional signage to distinguish one from the other and avoid beachgoers from monopolizing business parking. Private parking for beachgoers also utilizes a broad range of sign types, locations and construction techniques which adds to visual clutter.

Mistaken identity - This private parking sign can be confusing to some who may think it is public parking.

Private parking signage for beachgoers is inconsistent in design and location.
SECTION 2.6 - IDENTITY SIGNAGE

**Public Facilities Identity Signage**

Public Facilities identification signs represent a broad range of styles, locations and construction techniques. This makes it difficult for visitors to quickly identify where public facilities are located. These signs would better serve their purpose if they were unique and consistent.

Public Facilities identification signs on the side of buildings or in a location not easily seen by passersby may go unnoticed.

Public facilities directional signs that look like street signs are somewhat unidentifiable. To the contrary, the trolley stop signs located throughout Cocoa Beach are consistent and easily identifiable.

The CRA logo can be found in several locations around downtown; however, the locations, construction techniques, and styles are inconsistent.
Businesses Identity Signage

Business identification signs are critical to the financial success of individual businesses. However, many of the existing business signs are designed primarily for view from the automobile. They vary considerably in location, construction and style. Current code calls for nonconforming signs to be terminated within twenty (20) years of the effective date of the original sign permit or within ten (10) years of the effective date of this ordinance, whichever is greater. [Article 5, Section 6-30 of the City of Cocoa Beach Land Development Code]. While it is outside the scope of this study to address business signage ordinances, missing, unkempt and obsolete signage currently presents a negative image and promotes visual blight.

Missing, unkempt and obsolete business signage in need of improvement.

Many businesses downtown use "A" frame sidewalks signs and would be better served with business directional signage.
SECTION 3

DESIGN STANDARDS
SECTION 3.1 - DESIGN PRINCIPLES

New signage within the Downtown Redevelopment must adhere to the universal design standards contained in the documents listed below. The following diagrams are a pictorial synthesis of these standards.

- MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) 2009
- ADAAG (ADA Accessibility Guidelines) 2004
- IBC (International Building Code) 2003
- SEGD (Society for Environmental Graphic Design) ADA White Paper Updated 2006

![Diagram of signage standards]

Text height and legibility for pedestrian and vehicular signs.
Setbacks and clearances to maintain accessible pathways. Left to right: signs over sidewalks; pedestrian oriented single post signs; double post signs; wall mounted signs.

Top view of signs mounted on sidewalks.

Optimal mounting heights for comfortable viewing of various types of information. Left to right: side-to-side viewing; mounting for signs intended to be touched; strategy for kiosks.
SECTION 3.2 - CONSISTENT SIGNAGE

Consistent signage, a key element to this wayfinding plan, will not only provide direction, but will unify the uses throughout the Downtown Redevelopment Area further enhancing the community identity. Creative, coordinated and consistent signage leads to a safe, efficient navigation system which minimizes confusion and visually supports the unique cultural aspects associated with Cocoa Beach. Conversely, uncoordinated and inconsistent signage leads to navigational confusion and visual blight detracting from the aesthetic appeal of the CRA.

Part of a consistent signage program, it is proposed to use a color-coded system to identify districts like the example shown below.

Example of a Color-Coded Community Wayfinding Guide Sign System
SECTION 3.3 - WAYFINDING SIGNS TYPOLOGY

As a result of the inventory/analysis phase of this study it became evident that there is a need for a consistent “family” or signs typology which will guide the removal and replacement of existing signage. It is anticipated that this will occur over time. Adherence to these guidelines will promote consistency, safety and convenience of the traveling public when visiting Cocoa Beach. The following graphics represent the generic family of sign types expected to be utilized within the Downtown Core...

[Diagram showing various types of signs and their specifications]
SECTION 4.1 - WAYFINDING SIGNS LOCATION MAP
SECTION 4.2 - GUIDE & STREET NAME SIGNS

Vehicular Informational Guide Signs-Downtown
(Outside the Downtown area)

Vehicular Informational Guide Signs-Districts
(Outside the Downtown area)

Street Name Signs w/ District Colors

Light blue from CRA Logo
Green background w/ white letters, lines & arrows
SECTION 4.3 - WAYFINDING SIGNS - STYLE #1

Vertical Gateway Monument Signs

Horizontal Gateway Monument Signs

Public Facilities Identification Monument Signs

Vehicular Directional Signs (Within the Downtown Area)

Public Parking Directional Signs

Public Parking Arrival Signs
SECTION 4.4 - WAYFINDING SIGNS - STYLE #2

Light blue border
Seafoam or aluminum sign w/ black letters
White background
CRA logo
Welcome to Downtown Cocoa Beach

Welcome to Downtown Cocoa Beach

City of Cocoa Beach Fire Station

Vertical Gateway Monument Signs
Horizontal Gateway Monument Signs
Public Facilities Identification Monument Signs

Aluminum sign
Light blue from CRA logo
White background w/ black letters, lines & arrows
Downtown Cocoa Beach

↑ City Hall
↑ Library
← Beach Access

Public Parking
Public Parking Arrial Signs

Vehicular Directional Signs (Within the Downtown Area)
SECTION 4.5 - WAYFINDING SIGNS - STYLE #3