City of Santa Rosa

Wayfinding Sign Ordinance

File No: REZ23-009

Citywide

February 22, 2024
Planning Commission

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Planning and Economic Development

Project Description

Zoning Code Amendments for Wayfinding Signage

- Business Wayfinding and Public/Civic Amenity Wayfinding
- General Standards
- Eligible Criteria
- Design Standards
- Application Process
- Removal
- Definitions
- Renumbering Zoning Code Sections
- Transit Hub Signage

Project Timeline

- Railroad Square Business Wayfinding Pilot Program – March 2023
- Downtown Wayfinding Sign Program – September 2023
- Public Survey – October 9 to November 9, 2023
- Design Review Board – January 17, 2024
- Cultural Heritage Board – January 25, 2024
- Planning Commissions – February 22, 2024
- City Council – March 26, 2024
- Ordinance in Effect – April 2024

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Existing Signs

Railroad Square Business Wayfinding

Downtown Public/Civic Wayfinding

Definitions

Adding Wayfinding Sign and related terms to the Glossary

- Business Wayfinding
- Public/Civic Amenity Wayfinding
- Sign Plaque
- Sign Post
- Sign Header
- Iconography
- Pictogram

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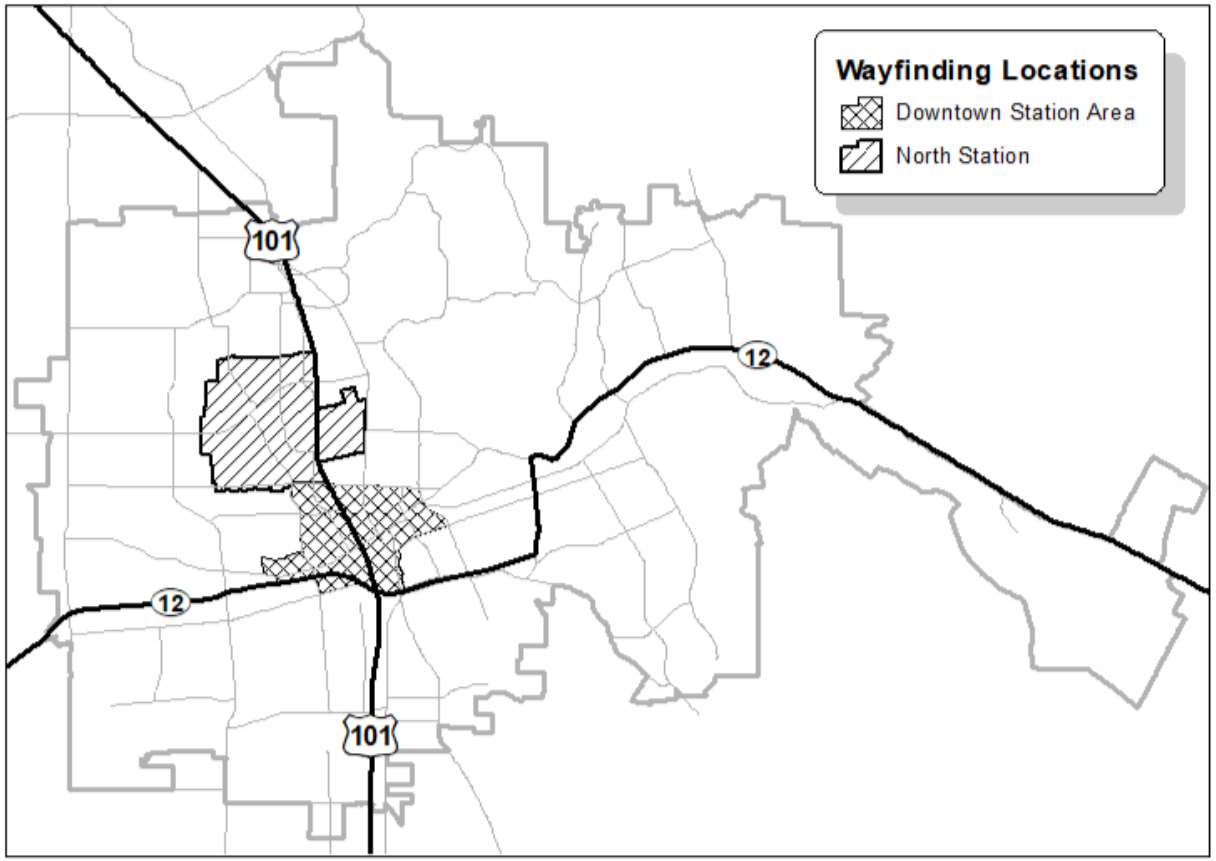
Permitted Areas



Dimensions

Sign Post	Sign Plaque	Font Size
Maximum of 8 feet in height	**Maximum of 12-inches in height by 24-inches in length**	**2-inches minimum and 6-inches maximum**

Business names shall follow font size requirement

- Associated text with business can be smaller than 2-inches
- Business name shall be more prominent
- Logos do not have a size requirement
- Businesses with just their name as the logo must follow font size requirement

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Existing Sign Dimensions

	Railroad Square	Downtown
Sign Post	Height: 8 feet	Smallest: 7 feet in height Tallest: 10 feet in height
Sign Plaque	Height: 6.75-inches Length: 17-inches	Height: 4-inches Length: 20-inches
Font Size	Smallest: 1/3-inch in height Largest: 6-inches in height	Smallest: 1/3-inch in height Largest: 1-inch in height

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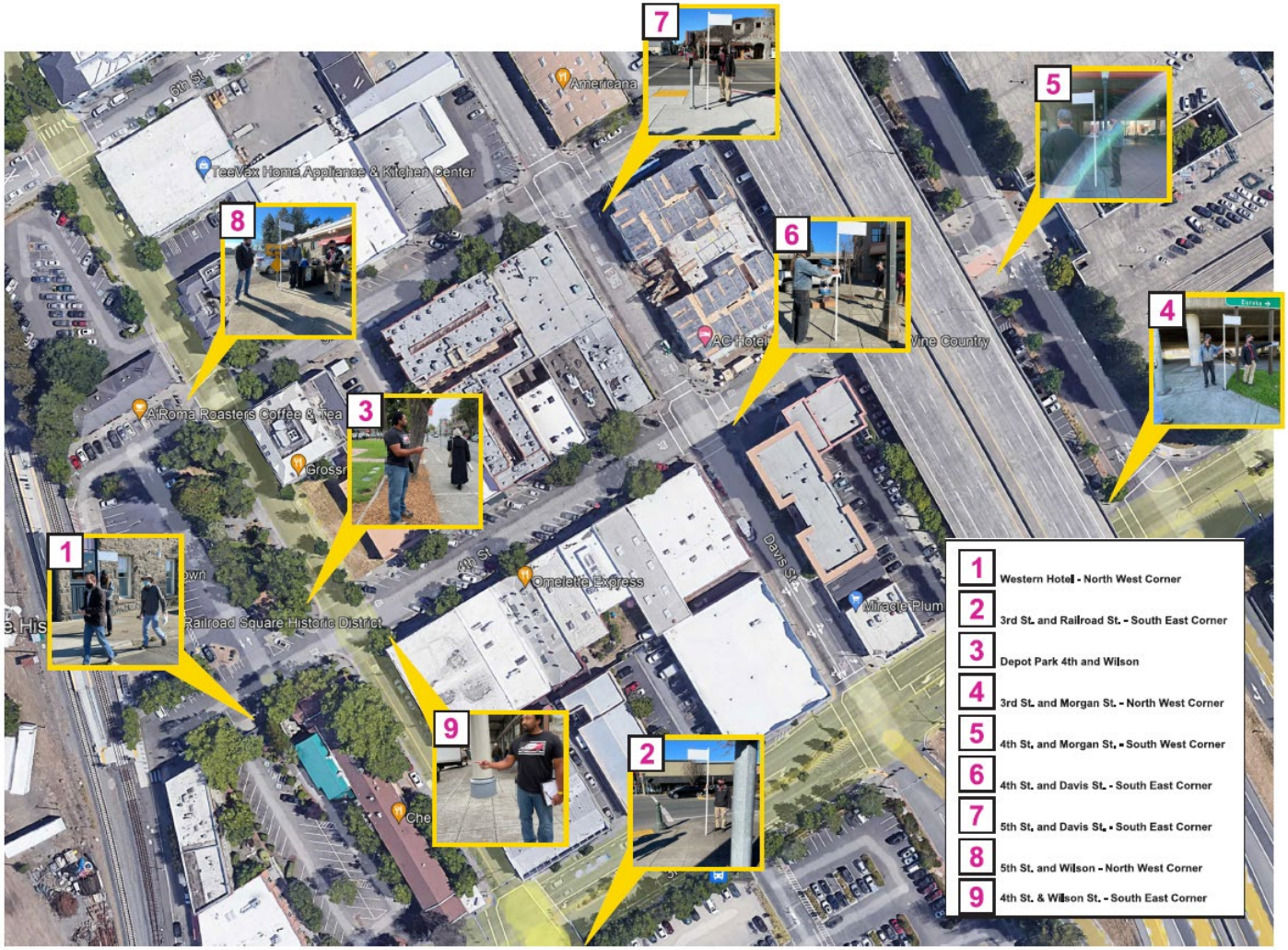
Railroad Square Signs

Railroad Square Map



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Downtown Signs

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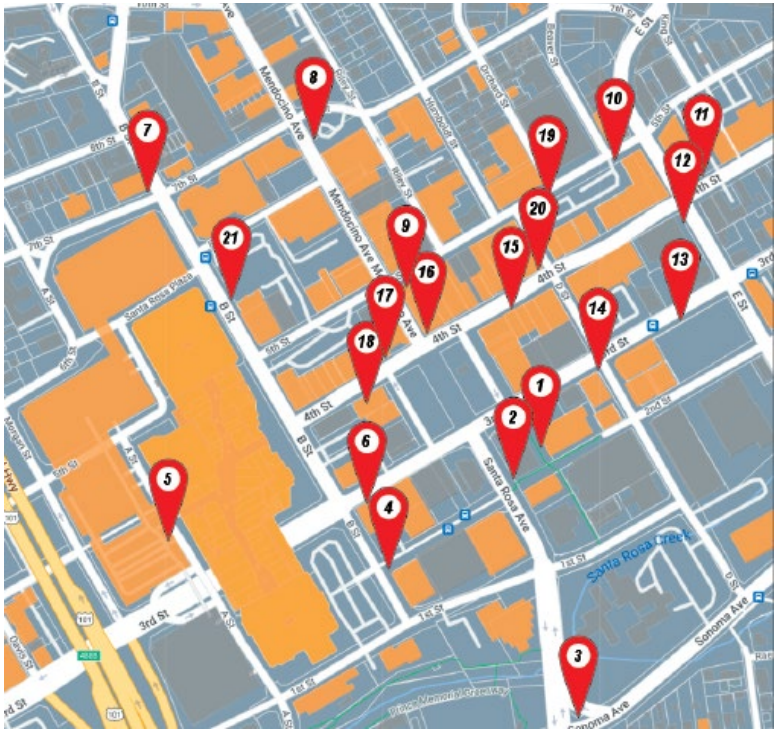
Downtown Map



Sign #	Location	Sides	Panels Side 1	Panels Side 2
1	Comstock (Private)	1	City Hall, Julliard Park, Transit Mall, D Street Garage, CHS	
2	SR Ave & 2nd (D)	2	City Hall, PM Greenway, Luther Burbank Gardens, Transit Mall, CHS	Library, Museum of Sonoma County, Transit Mall, 3rd Street Parking Garage, Courthouse Square
3	SR Ave & Sonoma (NE)	2	City Hall, Julliard Park, Luther Burbank Gardens, PM Greenway, CHS	City Hall, Shopping & Dining, Julliard Park, PM Greenway, CHS
4	Transit Mall (NW)	1	Railroad Square, Santa Rosa Plaza, Museum, SMART, CHS	
5	Morgan & 4th (Private)	2	Railroad Square, Santa Rosa Plaza, Museum, SMART, CHS	Railroad Square, Santa Rosa Plaza, Museum, SMART, CHS
6	3rd & B (SE)	2	Santa Rosa Plaza, Museum, SMART, Transit Mall, CHS	Library, Railroad Square, Museum, SMART, CHS
7	7th & B (NW)	2	Museum, Railroad Square, Santa Rosa Plaza, 7th Street Parking Garage, CHS	Museum, Cherry Street, Shopping & Dining, Santa Rosa Plaza, CHS
8	7th & B (SE)	2	Museum, Railroad Square, Cherry Street, 7th Street Parking Garage, CHS	Library, Santa Rosa Plaza, Shopping & Dining, Transit Mall,CHS
9	5th & Mendo (SE)	2	Museum, Library, Cherry Street, 5th Street Garage, CHS	Santa Rosa Plaza, Railroad Square, Museum, Cherry Street, CHS
10	5th Mid Block (700 S)	2	Library, Railroad Square, Shopping & Dining, Santa Rosa Plaza, CHS	Library, Shopping & Dining, Fremont Park, 5th Street Garage, CHS
11	4th & E (NE)	1	Shopping & Dining, Library, Post Office, Fremont Park, CHS	
12	4th & E (SW)	1	Shopping & Dining, Library, Santa Rosa Plaza, Fremont Park, CHS	
13	3rd Mid Block (700 S)	2	City Hall, Post Office, Transit Mall, D Street Garage, CHS	Library, Post Office, City Hall, Shopping & Dining, CHS
14	3rd & D (SW)	1	City Hall, Library, D Street Garage, Transit Mall, CHS	
15	4th Mid Block (600 S)	2	Library, City Hall, Fremont Park, 3rd Street Garage, CHS	Santa Rosa Plaza, Museum, Railroad Square, 5th Street Garage, CHS
16	4th & Mendo (NE)	2	Museum, Santa Rosa Plaza, Railroad Square, SMART, CHS	City Hall, Santa Rosa Plaza, Railroad Square, SMART, CHS
17	4th & Mendo (NW)	1	Museum, Santa Rosa Plaza, Railroad Square, SMART, CHS	
18	4th Mid Block (500 S)	2	Santa Rosa Plaza, Railroad Square, Transit Mall, SMART, CHS	Library, City Hall, Museum, 3rd Street Garage, CHS
19	5th & D (SE)	1	City Hall, Museum, Santa Rosa Plaza, Shopping & Dining, CHS	
20	4th & E (NW)	1	Library, Fremont Park, Post Office, 3rd Street Garage, CHS	
21	B Mid Block (400 E)	2	Museum, Santa Rosa Plaza, Railroad Square, 7th Street Parking Garage, CHS	Santa Rosa Plaza, Shopping & Dining, Library, Transit Mall, CHS

General Standards

- 3 Signposts Minimum for Program
- 6 Signs Per Business
- Public Right-of-Way Standards
- ADA Standards
- Traffic Standards
- Zoning Standards

Design Standards

- Walking Time Estimates allowed
- Flashing/Digital Signs prohibited
- Directional Arrows required
- Sign Header displaying the area's name and imagery of the location

Business Wayfinding Standards

- 1 Public/Civic Amenity Sign required per Signpost
- Iconography allowed
- Logos allowed
- Business phone numbers, physical addresses, QR codes, and website address text are prohibited

Public/Civic Wayfinding Standards

- Uniform design required including color palette, font sizes, font type
- English & Spanish text required
- Iconography required
- Directional Arrows required

Application Process

A Sign Program with an associated fee is required for each Wayfinding program submittal.

The following must also be included:

- Location Map
- Conceptual renderings scaled to each site location
- Color Palette
- Font Size
- Font Type
- Iconography
- Pictograms
- Directional Arrows
- Proposed Sign Plaques, Sign Header, and Signposts
- Dimensions
- Materials
- Physical mockup to scale

Transit Hub Signs

The City is working with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) on Regional Transit Signage. Additional standards are proposed to separate from Wayfinding Sign Programs.

- Informational Kiosks
- Maps
- Transit Hub Signage

Public Survey

The Public Survey (English & Spanish) was open from October 9, 2023 to November 9, 2023 with over 400 individual respondents.

Themes of Common Comments:

- Cost for the City Budget and Applicants
- Sign Design
- Great for Tourism & Residents
- Promote Bike and Pedestrian usage
- City needs Emergency 911 Poles
- Signs not necessary due to present-day technology
- Remove all Wayfinding signs
- Public/Civic Amenities should be required and clear
- Too much long-term maintenance
- Code Enforcement needs to remove all ‘Sandwich Boards”
- Remove Parking Meters to promote walkability with Wayfinding

Cultural Heritage Board Recommendations

The Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) provided recommendations to the proposed Zoning Code text amendment on January 17, 2024, the following have been included:

- Each signpost should have a sign header that clearly demonstrates the name of the Preservation District.
- Businesses should use their individual logos.
- Incorporating Public/Civic Amenities should be a requirement for Business Wayfinding.
- Historic Landmarks should be counted toward complying with the required Public/Civic Amenity Wayfinding signage.

Design Review Board Recommendations

The Design Review Board (DRB) provided recommendations to the proposed Zoning Code text amendment on January 25, 2024, the following have been included:

- Sign plaque dimensions should 12-inches in height
- A Wayfinding Sign Program should include a minimum of 3 Signposts
- Create specific Sign Program application requirements
- A Sign Header should be required for each Signpost
- Business logos should be used in business wayfinding.
- Public/Civic Amenity Wayfinding should have a uniform design (color, font type and size)
- Use pictograms when legally required

DRB and CHB Recommendations Not Included

The following recommendations have not been included :

- Overall design should match the historic character of the Preservation District
- Sign posts should have a similar design to the character of the area
- Concept review by the DRB
- Concept review by the CHB

These recommendations would add discretion to the proposed ministerial process, which was not the intent. The Ordinance is intended to create a streamlined process. Adding discretionary review would add time and uncertainty.

Issues/Public Comment

- There are no unresolved issues as a result of staff review.
- There have been no public comments for this item.

Environmental Review

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The proposed amendments have been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

- Exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(2) because they will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment
- Not a project as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, as they have no potential for resulting in a physical change in the environment, directly or indirectly
- Exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 and 15304 because they would add signs to existing City right-of-way
- Consistent with CEQA Section 15183, Projects consistent with a Community Plan, General Plan, or Zoning. (Santa Rosa General Plan, North Station Area Specific Plan, Downtown Station Area Specific Plan)

Required Findings

- The proposed amendment is consistent with the goals and policies of all elements of the General Plan, and any applicable specific plan.
- The proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City.
- Additional finding for Zoning Code amendments: The proposed amendment is internally consistent with other applicable provisions of this Zoning Code.
- The proposed project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Recommendation

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Planning Commission, by resolution, recommend that the City Council adopt a Zoning Code Text Amendment to amend Title 20 of the Santa Rosa City Code, Chapter 20-38, to provide standards for Wayfinding Signs, and Section 20-70.020, Definitions of Specialized Terms and Phrases, to add definitions related to Wayfinding Signs.

Questions

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