CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

City of Anaheim
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

DATE: JANUARY 9, 2024
FROM: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: LITTLE ARABIA HIGHWAY SIGNS ON INTERSTATE 5 AND STATE ROUTE 91

ATTACHMENT (Y/N): YES ITEM # 16

GOVERNMENT CODE § 84308 APPLIES: NO

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council, by Resolution, authorize the City of Anaheim to work with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the placement of highway directional signs guiding motorists to “The Little Arabia District.”

DISCUSSION:

At the August 23, 2022 City Council meeting, the City Council designated a portion of Brookhurst Street, bounded by Broadway in the north and Ball Road in the south, as Little Arabia. Subsequent to the Little Arabia District designation, on March 7, 2023, the City Council approved the Brookhurst Corridor Study to research the needs of residents, the local business community, and other local stakeholders. The Brookhurst Corridor Study was presented to the City Council during a workshop on December 12, 2023, along with recommendations to activate the Little Arabia designation. During the same meeting, Council Member Carlos Leon requested that staff begin the process of installing Little Arabia highway signs.

The Little Arabia District is comprised of retail, commercial, office, and residential land uses with a large concentration of Middle Eastern businesses. Little Arabia serves as a regional magnet for attracting shoppers, diners, and visitors looking to experience Middle Eastern culture and is unique in the State of California as the only designated region commemorating Middle Eastern culture. One of the findings of the Brookhurst Corridor Study was a desire by local stakeholders to add directional signs to the highways that have exits on Brookhurst Street that would lead visitors to the district area.

The California Streets and Highways Code, Statute 101.12, includes specific guidelines for placing and maintaining signs on highways directing motorists to communities within the geographical boundaries of a city for purposes of highlighting a cultural designation. Among those guidelines are that the community is culturally unique, the name of the community has resulted from the influence of a culture over a significant period of time, the general public and media commonly recognize the name of the
community, the community is located within a city, signs are consistent with signing requirements for the state highway system, and the geographical boundary of the community is within three miles of the state highway exit.

Additionally, the statute requires that the governing body of the city, county, or city and county in which the community is located, adopt a resolution that designates the name of the community that is to be used on directional signs, the geographic boundaries of the community, and a request for the department to post the signs on the highway.

Little Arabia meets all of the conditions outlined above, including two major highways with exits within three miles of the Little Arabia District being Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 91 (SR-91). Highway Signs with the Little Arabia designation are proposed to be added to Northbound and Southbound exits 113A on I-5 and on Eastbound and Westbound exits 26 on SR-91. The proposed Resolution will affirm the City’s support for placing directional signs on the highways adjacent to Little Arabia. Staff has hired a consultant that will process the application and will submit the resolution if approved by the City Council.

In order to expedite the process, the City will manufacture the four signs and provide them to Caltrans for installation on I-5 and SR-91. The estimated time range for the signs to be installed is about six to nine months.

**IMPACT ON BUDGET:**

Funding is available in the Department’s FY 2023/24 Budget from Economic Development Funds.

Respectfully Submitted, 

Concurred by,

Sergio M. Ramirez 
Director of Economic Development

Rudy Emami 
Director of Public Works

**Attachments:**
1. Resolution
2. Location Map