



CITY OF KIRKLAND
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: James Lopez, Deputy City Manager
Chris Hendrickson, Web & Multimedia Content Specialist

Date: April 4, 2021

Subject: FUNDING FOR EXTERIOR SIGNAGE AT THE KIRKLAND VISITOR CENTER

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council receive a recommendation of the Tourism Development Committee (TDC) to expend up to \$20,000 in lodging tax reserves for exterior signage at the Kirkland Visitor Center and provide direction to staff on a preferred funding option.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

In January of 2019, the City Council approved a TDC recommendation to use up to \$6,400 from lodging tax reserve funds to support the Kirkland Downtown Association (KDA) in funding exterior signage for the Kirkland Visitor Center, originally located at 440 Central Way. A Municipal Services Agreement was executed; however, the sign project did not come to fruition within the term of the agreement, which was in effect until December 31, 2019. At that point, the funds were unencumbered.

Since that time, the KDA and the Greater Kirkland Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) have moved into a new shared space at Kirkland Urban, which now houses the new Kirkland Visitor Center at 400 Urban Plaza Suite 135. The new Kirkland Visitor Center is positioned along Central Way, a key east-west corridor which draws about 15,888 vehicles per day, based on City data collected in 2019. The City, in partnership with the Chamber and the KDA, is actively engaged in efforts to reestablish Kirkland as not only a tourism destination, but a destination for businesses, both of which the Kirkland Visitor Center serves. Currently, there is no sign that identifies the Kirkland Visitor Center or calls attention to its amenities, listed above. The Chamber and KDA's shared vision for the Kirkland Visitor Center is to restore this vital community asset and use it to enhance Kirkland's economic recovery. This sign is intended to draw in small business owners and entrepreneurs, visitors, travelers, and locals.

In alignment with Kirkland Urban requirements for external signage, the KDA is proposing two signs. The first is a "blade sign" to extend perpendicular from the side of the building. The second sign consists of lighted "channel letters," which lay flush against the building. Both have been designed with Kirkland's waterfront in mind.

The KDA received two estimates for the signage, and the preferred estimate quotes \$17,036 for both signs. This is the higher of the two estimates by roughly \$2,500, however the KDA would prefer to proceed with that estimate as it is from a Kirkland-based business familiar with Kirkland Urban's guidelines and criteria for signage, which will reduce the potential for complications during sign development and installation. The KDA also requested reimbursement on other possible incidental charges, such as third-party inspections, and for permit fees to be waived, in effect asking the TDC to cover City permit fees. A detailed cost breakdown can be found in the KDA presentation slides to the TDC (Attachment A).

At its April 1, 2021 meeting, the TDC passed by motion a recommendation to the City Council that the City use up to \$20,000 in lodging tax reserves to fund the exterior signage, any possible incidental

charges, and to cover the City's permit fees. The motion included a directive that City staff should explore the potential of cost sharing through other funding sources within the City's budget. Being as this signage serves not only the City's tourism program but also local and regional economic development, the utilization of the City Manager's Office economic development budget would be a possible funding source.

The TDC currently has \$180,716 available in its reserves. After an anticipated June budget adjustment, the CMO economic development professional services budget for 2021 will have approximately \$34,000 remaining that is unencumbered or uncommitted to other uses. The economic development program intended those funds to support on-going Shop Local Kirkland consumer marketing and business onboarding efforts, local business outreach and engagement, as well as other pandemic-related small business support. However, specific uses of those funds have not been identified at this time.

Funding Source Options:

- Option 1: Use up to \$20,000 from lodging tax reserves to accommodate this request.
- Option 2: Council creates a percentage split between lodging tax reserves and funds from CMO economic development professional services.

NEXT STEPS:

Staff seek Council direction at the April 20 Council meeting for which of the two funding options Council would prefer. With Council direction on April 20, 2021, staff will return to the May 4 Council meeting with a fiscal note authorizing the use of lodging tax reserves in the prescribed amount.

Attachment A: KDA Presentation Slides to the TDC



Kirkland Visitor Center

400 Urban Plaza Suite 135

Kirkland Urban

Blade Sign

- Fast Signs
- Crossroad Sign

\$5603

\$5019

Estimates include design manufacture, installation , and permit acquisition. City permit fees may be additional

Sign #2 - Blade Sign Double Sided - Non-Lit



Channel Letters

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| • Fast Signs | • Crossroads Sign |
| • \$11,433 | \$9,433 |

Estimates include design
manufacture, installation , and
permit acquisition. City permit
fees may be additional



Visitor Center Request

- Two Signs and installation: from \$14,452 to \$17,036
- Permitting Fees waived
- Reimbursement on other charges based on hard costs

Previous 2019 agreement was approved for use of Lodging Tax Reserves up to \$6,400 for Visitor Center Sign for a single blade