Asian Cultural District.”

Historic Districts

City officials say freeway signs are used to distinguish important historic, cultural and commercial districts. The City of San Diego already has some freeway signs that identify Little Italy, the Gaslamp District and Little Saigon.

“Those signs rightly identify and celebrate the Convoy’s rich cultural traditions and history and signify to visitors and locals that this is one of San Diego’s hubs for AAPI-owned businesses,” said San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria. “This is an important milestone for this neighborhood that would not have been possible without the consistent support and advocacy of community leaders and businesses here in the Convoy District.”

In May and June of 2022, the Convoy District group raised $31,000 from community members, businesses and organizations to fund community programming in the district, earmarking some of that money for the signs. And in partnership with the City of San Diego and the California Department of Transportation, the signs are slated to be installed this month.

The signs, going up at the north and south exit ramps at Clairemont Mesa Boulevard and Balboa Avenue, are designed to draw more visitors and shoppers to restaurants and businesses in the Convoy District area, Nguyen said.

Raising Awareness

Promoting Convoy businesses is especially important now because many have experienced financial hardships during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We also know these signs will help foster new investment, entrepreneurship and community events in Convoy, which has organically grown to become the heart of San Diego’s diverse 433,000-plus member Asian American Pacific Islander community,” Nguyen said. “The signs are important to provide direction but they’re also a symbol that says, ‘Hey! We’re here!’ We hope it will attract more locals. And also, the 805 has 200,000 commuters a day, and people come from Mexico and Los Angeles and use it, so we hope that they will be drawn to an exit and start exploring. This is all about inviting people to come, encouraging people to check it out.”

The Convoy District Partnership works with many groups that also keep the AAPI needs in mind, including the Asian Business Association of San Diego, the Alliance Small Business Development Center for the Asian Business Association of San Diego, estimated that there are about 500 Asian-owned businesses in the Convoy area, including restaurants, bars, professional services, travel agencies, nonprofit groups, philanthropic organizations, houses of worship, community and cultural centers and dance studios.

Quach said the Convoy District Group, the Asian Business Association of San Diego and the Asian Business Association of San Diego Foundation are now working together on getting a monument sign for the area, considering the spot at Convoy and Opportunity Road.

“That’s coming hopefully in a couple of years,” Quach said. “This area is growing. There is housing coming, there’s been talk of the Trolley maybe coming through or a dedicated bus lane. The Convoy area has gotten some recognition with restaurants mentioned in the Michelin guide and on national TV food networks.”

“When people are driving by and seeing the signs, they might wonder, what is the ‘Convoy Asian Cultural District?’ What does it mean?” Quach said. “Maybe they won’t pull over right now, but it puts it in their minds. We’ve already seen with posts on social media that it has raised the awareness of the Convoy District area. For those people who already knew about it, this reinforces it in their minds.”

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

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SMITHGROUP

ARCHITECTURE

Announcement

Chris Anderson

Environmental Science Associates (ESA) announces that Dusty Ramsey has taken the helm as the firm’s first female Information Technology (IT) Director. Supporting firmwide technology operations, this critical position allows for ESA’s nationwide team of experts to efficiently collaborate and assist clients to the highest degree—while working from anywhere.

Serving as ESA’s IT Delivery Success Manager for the past three years, Ramsey has built her career in the AEC industry. Her experience includes using technology to deliver real-world projects for clients, as well as training personnel on the use of the ever-evolving software and applications available.

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