


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	26-191	Meeting:	June 8, 2026
	Agenda Item:	53A	Roll Call:	26-0707
	Submitted by:	Steven L. Naber, P.E., City Engineer		

AGENDA HEADING:

Ordering construction of the following: Downtown Skywalk Signage Replacement - Receiving bids, (6-23-26), and Setting date of hearing, (7-13-26). (Construction Estimate - \$500,000).

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend the City Council order construction of the improvement and set dates to receive bids and hold a public hearing, as required by Iowa Code, utilizing the method of financing referenced below. Replacement of overhead and wall-mounted wayfinding signage located within the downtown skywalk system.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$500,000 City Engineer's Estimate

Funding Source: 2026-27 CIP, Page 166, Skywalk System, SW094

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- This is a rebid of a project that was previously bid on May 5, 2026, with zero (0) bids being received. A Council action to dismiss the previously scheduled public hearing is also scheduled to be on this June 8, 2026, Council agenda.
- The Engineering Department has prepared plans, specifications, form of contract documents, and City Engineer's estimate for the construction of the Downtown Skywalk Signage Replacement, Activity ID 04-2026-017. The improvement includes the installation of overhead and wall-mounted static directional/wayfinding signage throughout the downtown skywalk system, and other areas as directed by the City Engineer, all in accordance with the contract documents located throughout all skywalks, Des Moines, Iowa.
- The estimated construction cost is \$500,000. The proposed plans, specifications, and form of contract documents are available for public inspection in the Des Moines City Engineer's Office and will be available as of June 9, 2026, via the City's electronic bid submission system at <https://www.bidexpress.com/businesses/27010/home>.
- In late 2023, the City contracted with RDG Planning & Design to complete design for Skywalk Wayfinding Improvements. As part of the design process, a Wayfinding Masterplan was

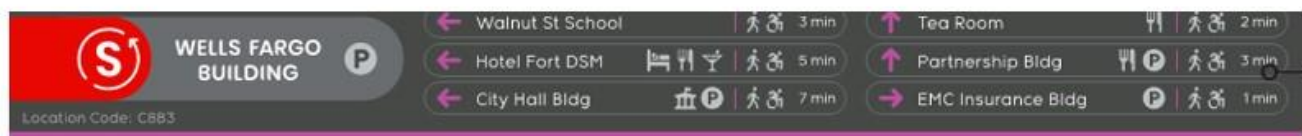
developed in coordination with a Project Leaders and Stakeholders group comprised of representatives from the City of Des Moines, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Catch DSM and the Downtown Neighborhood Association.

- The Wayfinding Master Plan, March 25, 2026, was comprised of several components including discussion on Skywalk Branding, Community Engagement, Nomenclature and Prioritization, Signage Standards and Specifications, Project Phasing, Replacement Destinations, Wayfinding Exhibits and Cost Estimates.
- Community Engagement consisted of Online Surveys, Stakeholder Listening Sessions, Kiosk Accessibility Testing and Collaborative Feedback.
- Key Audiences engaged throughout the process included Iowa Department for the Blind, Des Moines Access Advisory Board, Central Iowa Shelter & Services, Des Moines Civil and Human Rights Commission, Des Moines Public Library, Downtown Neighborhood Association, Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART), Des Moines Street Collective, Fleet Feet Running Club, Downtown YMCA, as well as the surveying of the public during downtown events and via Catch DSM promotions.
- Based on feedback that was received, RDG developed design plans for the replacement of signage and equipment throughout the Skywalk system.
- This project is anticipated to begin in summer of 2026 and be completed in winter of 2027.
- A future Phase II will map the entire skywalk system through a secondary vendor. Quick Response (QR) Codes will be applied to signage locations to assist visitors in wayfinding via Apple and Google Maps to be scanned via mobile devices. Visitors will be able to enter their destination on these map apps and then will receive direction through the skywalks similar to vehicular mapping on their mobile device. The estimated cost for Phase II is \$12,000.

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE EXAMPLES



ALTERNATIVE LAYOUTS



PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: April 20, 2026

Roll Call Number: [26-0484](#)

Action: [Ordering](#) construction of Downtown Skywalk Signage Replacement: Receiving of bids, (5-5-26) and Setting date of hearing, (6-8-26), Engineer's estimate, \$550,000. ([Council Communications No. 26-144](#)) Moved by Voss to adopt. Second by Barron. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Access Advisory Board

Date: March 18, 2026

Resolution Number: 26-07

Action: The unanimous consensus of the board members in attendance was to approve the project as designed with no recommended alterations.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

- Anticipated actions include public hearing, receive and file bids, designate lowest bidder, and approve contract and bond; also partial payments to the contractor and final acceptance of work.

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