



Carlsbad Archway Sign

A Landmark to Build Community and Recognition

Carlsbad, California, is located on a seven-mile stretch of Pacific coastline in northern San Diego County. Attractions include beautiful beaches, seasonal flowers, and a park that's home to free-roaming peacocks. It also features the original Legoland theme park, a renowned aquarium, and corporate headquarters for TaylorMade Golf.

Now the town is also home to an eye-catching sign that spans the historic Pacific Coast

Highway, inviting passersby to stop, shoot a photo, and shop with local merchants. Federal Heath is proud to be part of the story that turned a vision into a reality. Highlights from this project:

- » Producing a city sign that became an instant icon on a historic highway
- » Developing a design that satisfied a community's shared vision
- » Providing custom engineering, manufacturing, delivery, and installation





A Story of Vision

As a real estate broker, Carlton Lund knew the value of having a good location and telling people about it. As former chairman of Carlsbad's Chamber of Commerce, he knew the value of community and healthy growth for a city. As a citizen with roots in the Midwest, he fondly remembered how each town there had a distinctive sign.

At the intersection of those interests, a vision emerged for Lund, one that he began to share widely in the early 2000s. What if Carlsbad built a landmark-worthy sign? What if that sign caught the attention of people passing along the historic Pacific Coast Highway, drawing them into Carlsbad to take a photo and visit the shop?

A Story of Perseverance

Turning vision into shared vision is often difficult and takes time. While many people saw the possibilities right away, others failed to understand the value. Jumping to the details of design, discussions drew various viewpoints. Federal Heath became part of the vision in 2013, when Lund enlisted us to bring a professional hand to design and consider the realities of engineering and construction.



A Story of Revelation

Just as the project seemed to be losing momentum in its quest for consensus, something unexpected happened. Someone discovered a photograph of a street scene from the 1930s. Across the street hung a large sign with just one word: “Carlsbad.” Not only did the photograph keep the dream alive with a newfound burst of nostalgia, but it suggested the design that finally won the day.

A Story of Philanthropy

The sign still needed a source of funding. Thankfully, Lund had done business with the top executive at TaylorMade Golf – an international business with headquarters in Carlsbad. From that relationship grew an offer for TaylorMade to sponsor the sign. That cleared the way for the City Council to fully consider the proposal, leading to their approval.



A Story of Fulfillment

Federal Heath got the go-ahead to finalize design drawings and proceed with surveying, permitting, engineering, and manufacturing. Lund was hands-on in the process, sometimes visiting our nearby Oceanside plant to chat with workers and check on progress. At one point a bird-deterrent element was considered, but eventually rejected in favor of aesthetics.

The final sign was a thing of beauty. Federal Heath incorporated both LED and neon for nighttime illumination which, as Lund pointed out, required only a few cents a day to operate. The archway sign – a substantial 82 feet wide and 29 feet tall – spans the full width of historic Highway 101, known locally as Carlsbad Boulevard. Delivery came on a specially extended flatbed truck that made a dry run beforehand to ensure we could successfully navigate the route.

Installation by Swain Sign attracted plenty of attention as the sign was hoisted and secured into place. The city conducted a lighting ceremony Jan. 8, 2015. As Lund predicted, the sign has become a landmark and the backdrop for selfies that often extend its reach far beyond Carlsbad’s borders every day.

In 2017, the sign was immortalized as a model in Legoland, joining icons like the Statue of Liberty and the Golden Gate Bridge. Lund was there for the unveiling of the 5,000-Lego version.

“This sign, which will be enjoyed by current and future generations of Carlsbad residents and those who visit our city, adds a distinctive touch to the Village area.”

- Quoted in *San Diego Union*

