Wayfinding Analysis Report

PREPARED FOR

City of Bedford, OH

Photos from: City of Bedford website, Cleveland Metroparks website, and Guide Studio

Guide

CONTENTS

Wayfinding is a critical component for developing positive experiences

Well-developed wayfinding systems signal that something is happening in your place; it serves as a catalyst to enhance community pride and image. Wayfinding programs will:
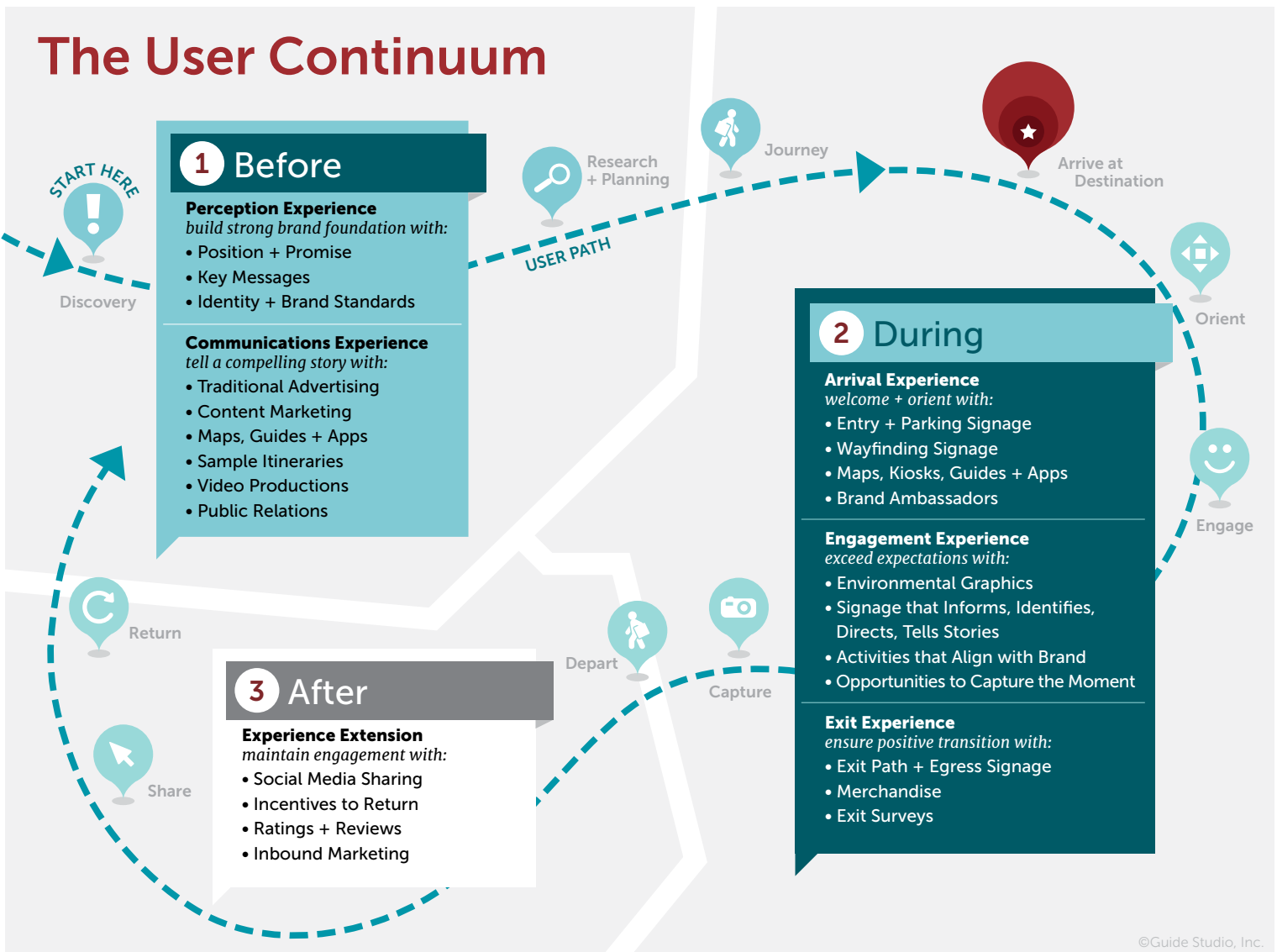
- Enhance your community's surrounding landscape

- Support understanding of your community

- Provide information for increased comfort and safety

- Elevate the perception of your place

- Inspire increased visitation

With a vast Metropark and bustling business community, The City of Bedford attracts many visitors who are unaware of its unique assets and charming Historic Downtown. An effective Signage and Wayfinding Program can allow visitors to comfortably navigate the city and direct them to the amenities and experiences the city has to offer.

Goals for a new Wayfinding and Signage Program for Bedford, OH

- Get people downtown

- Increase attendance for activities in the park

- Create a consistent brand/visual look

- Identifying public parks and city facilities

- Promote visitor amenities

- Identify public parking

The User Continuum

START HERE

Discovery

1 Before

Perception Experience
build strong brand foundation with:
• Position + Promise
• Key Messages
• Identity + Brand Standards

Communications Experience
tell a compelling story with:
• Traditional Advertising
• Content Marketing
• Maps, Guides + Apps
• Sample Itineraries
• Video Productions
• Public Relations

Research + Planning

Journey

USER PATH

Arrive at Destination

Orient

2 During

Arrival Experience
welcome + orient with:
• Entry + Parking Signage
• Wayfinding Signage
• Maps, Kiosks, Guides + Apps
• Brand Ambassadors

Engagement Experience
exceed expectations with:
• Environmental Graphics
• Signage that Informs, Identifies,
  Directs, Tells Stories
• Activities that Align with Brand
• Opportunities to Capture the Moment

Exit Experience
ensure positive transition with:
• Exit Path + Egress Signage
• Merchandise
• Exit Surveys

Engage

Return

Depart

Capture

3 After

Experience Extension
maintain engagement with:
• Social Media Sharing
• Incentives to Return
• Ratings + Reviews
• Inbound Marketing

Share

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When it comes to place-based experiences, setting expectations and consistently delivering throughout the entire experience is critical in creating positive impressions.

When we are talking about place, audiences, no matter how distinctive, share common ground in the sequence of time. Every experience can be defined in three categories: *before, during, and after.* We call this **The User Continuum.**

Connection with a place begins before arrival, and continues after leaving, but one of the first *physical interactions* a visitor has with a place is signage.
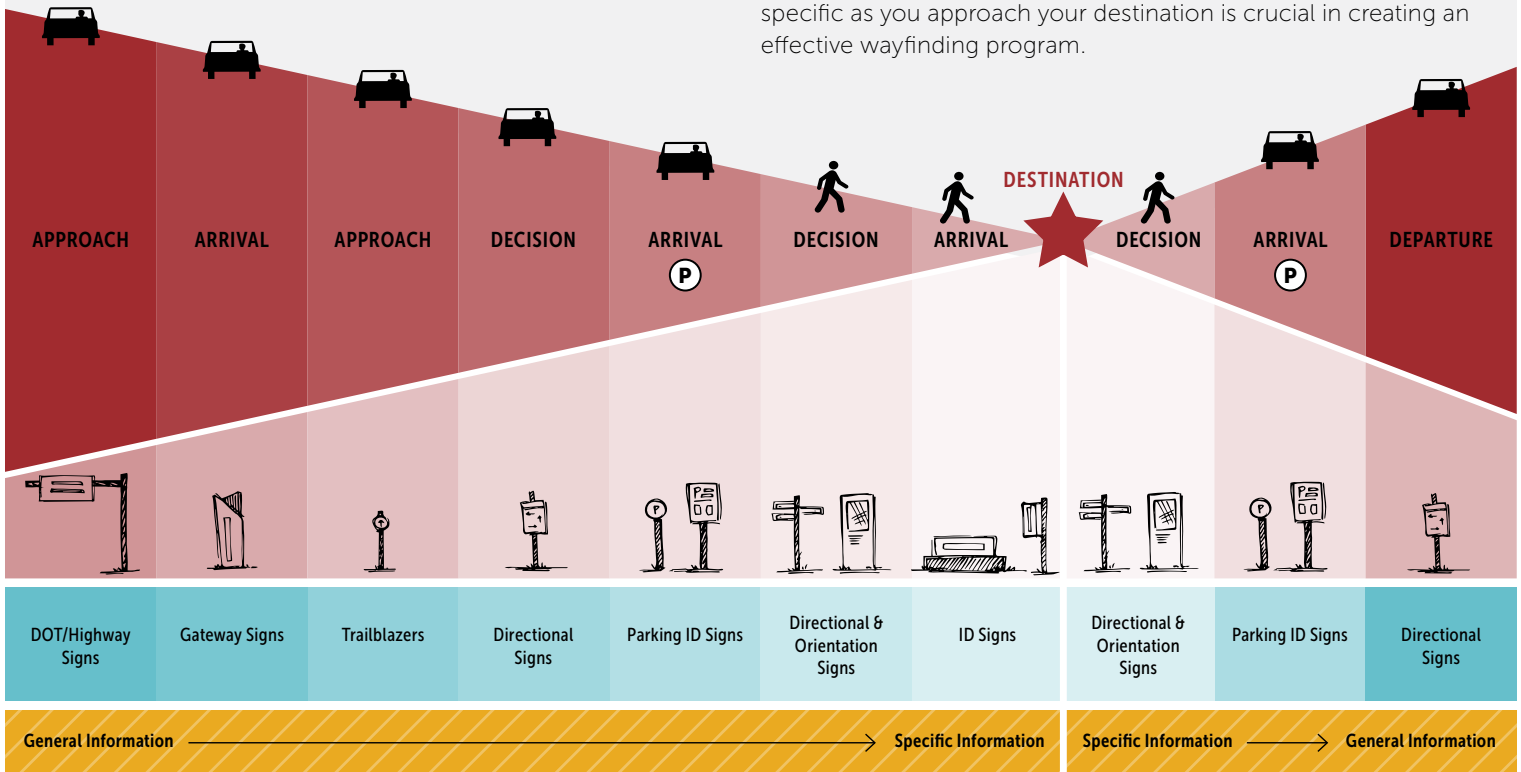
Signage occurs in *the during*—those in-the moment touch-points that a visitor interacts with as they experience your place. The touch-points signage and wayfinding address are *arrival, direction, orientation, identification, engagement and departure.* Paying close attention to these touch-points can create a positive perception, or if ignored, can leave a lasting negative impression regarding the safety, comfort, value and relevance of your place.

When you approach or travel through your community, what does that experience look and feel like? Is it nice? Unique? Does it tell visitors where they are? Or is it underwhelming, confusing, frustrating?

Putting yourself in your visitors' shoes will allow you to see the gaps in your user continuum that can then be addressed to provide a better experience. Understanding and managing the touch points in each sequence of time along The User Continuum is critical to presenting a great experience and lasting positive impression. The more touch points you can influence to meet the needs of your audience at each of these steps, the more successful the total experience can be.

The Wayfinding Funnel

Drivers traveling at speeds of 25 mph or greater cannot comprehend more than 4-5 messages. Therefore, a systematic approach to messaging that breaks down information from general to specific as you approach your destination is crucial in creating an effective wayfinding program.

APPROACH	ARRIVAL	APPROACH	DECISION	ARRIVAL Ⓟ	DECISION	ARRIVAL	DESTINATION ★	DECISION	ARRIVAL Ⓟ	DEPARTURE

| DOT/Highway Signs | Gateway Signs | Trailblazers | Directional Signs | Parking ID Signs | Directional & Orientation Signs | ID Signs | | Directional & Orientation Signs | Parking ID Signs | Directional Signs |

General Information ⟶ Specific Information   Specific Information ⟶ General Information

Design Criteria & Wayfinding Strategy

USER FRIENDLY | Text, graphics and mapping is legible and uncomplicated.
- Directional messages will be limited to no more than 4-5 messages.
- The users' initial destination for all vehicular wayfinding is Parking (closest to their destination).

AESTHETICS | Harmonious in all respects, enduring design and appropriate scale.

MAINTAINABLE | Cleanable, repairable surfaces, information easily changed or added, low maintenance and durable. Information hierarchy allows for an organized and manageable wayfinding program.

VANDAL RESISTANT | No exposed access points, tamper proof screws and bolts, strong structures that are securely installed.

ORIENTATION | Signs oriented for the greatest visibility for users.
- Landscaping and other structures should enhance and not interfere with the visibility of the sign.
- Directional signs will be implemented at key decision points and announce only major visitor-based destinations. Private businesses, (corporate offices, restaurants, hospitality, etc.) are not typically placed on community wayfinding signs.
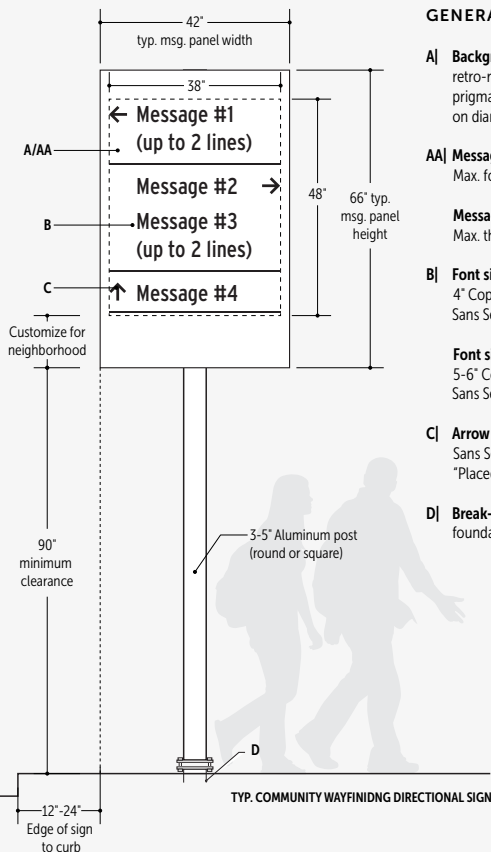
CONSISTENCY | Sign/element design are consistent throughout the sign system and easily recognized as information hubs throughout the City.
- Nomenclature should be consistent from wayfinding signs down to actual identification at the destination arrival point. This consistent language should flow down to pedestrian sign systems as well as destination language used by the places and institutions themselves.
- Parking lot identification sets up a recognizable system, limits message lengths, and reinforces a unified parking experience.

SYSTEM | This program must consider the use of all wayfinding tools, not simply signage.
- Sign messages should be communicated in a hierarchical progression from general to specific as visitors move from the outskirts of the city toward their destination.
- Effective wayfinding provides the most critical information at the proper and relevant time.

Anatomy of a Community Wayfinding Sign

42" typ. msg. panel width

38"

A/AA — ← Message #1 (up to 2 lines)

Message #2 →

B — Message #3 (up to 2 lines)

C — ↑ Message #4

48"   66" typ. msg. panel height

Customize for neighborhood

3-5" Aluminum post (round or square)

90" minimum clearance

D

12"-24" Edge of sign to curb

TYP. COMMUNITY WAYFINIDNG DIRECTIONAL SIGN

GENERAL GUIDELINES

A| Background and graphics to be retro-reflective using high-intensity prigmatic vinyl (graphics may be printed on diamond grade reflective sheeting)

AA| Message Quantity: less than 35MPH
Max. four (4) destinations

Message Quantity: greater than 35MPH
Max. three (3) destinations

B| Font size: less than 35MPH
4" Copy Height
Sans Serif

Font size: greater than 35MPH
5-6" Copy Height
Sans Serif

C| Arrow Style:
Sans Serif
"Placed with directive"

D| Break-away pole connection/ foundation as approved by DOT/FHWA

Wayfinding Challenges

- Inconsistent signage and brand   *Mis-matching signage creates confusion & anxiety while diluting brand image of the city*
- Lack of signage and scale   *Many too small to read at road speeds and directional information is lacking*
- Activities in Historic Downtown   *How to get people coming into the city to explore, visit shops/businesses and return*
- Events in Historic Downtown   *Parking not clearly identified, making attending events by car confusing*
- Road conditions.   *Some streets are in poor condition and are lack character*

Major Entry Roads

- **Broadway Ave. (State Rt. 14):** Commercially active, goes through Historic Downtown, visually appealing, access to the highway, connects to many roads in Bedford
- **Center Rd.:** Picturesque, lot of churches, commercial and residential
- **Columbus Rd.:** Not very busy 2 lane road
- **Northfield Rd. (State Rt. 8):** N/S access, does not take you through downtown, connects to many roads in Bedford
- **Rockside Rd.:** Automile, 4 lane main commercial route, connection to highway, intersection with Northfield is an eyesore
- **Solon Rd.:** Pretty, commercial and residential
- **Turney Rd.:** More residential 2 lane road, access to Metropark, contains rail crossing, Google changes name to W. Grace St. halfway through

Major Developments/Central Business Districts

- Historic Downtown   *Grant in place to update Broadway historic district*
- Red Bridge Connector   *Connection between Bedford Reservation and downtown*
- Automile   *Major visitor destination/business*
- Industrial Park   *Major commercial desitination could fit the look of city signs*
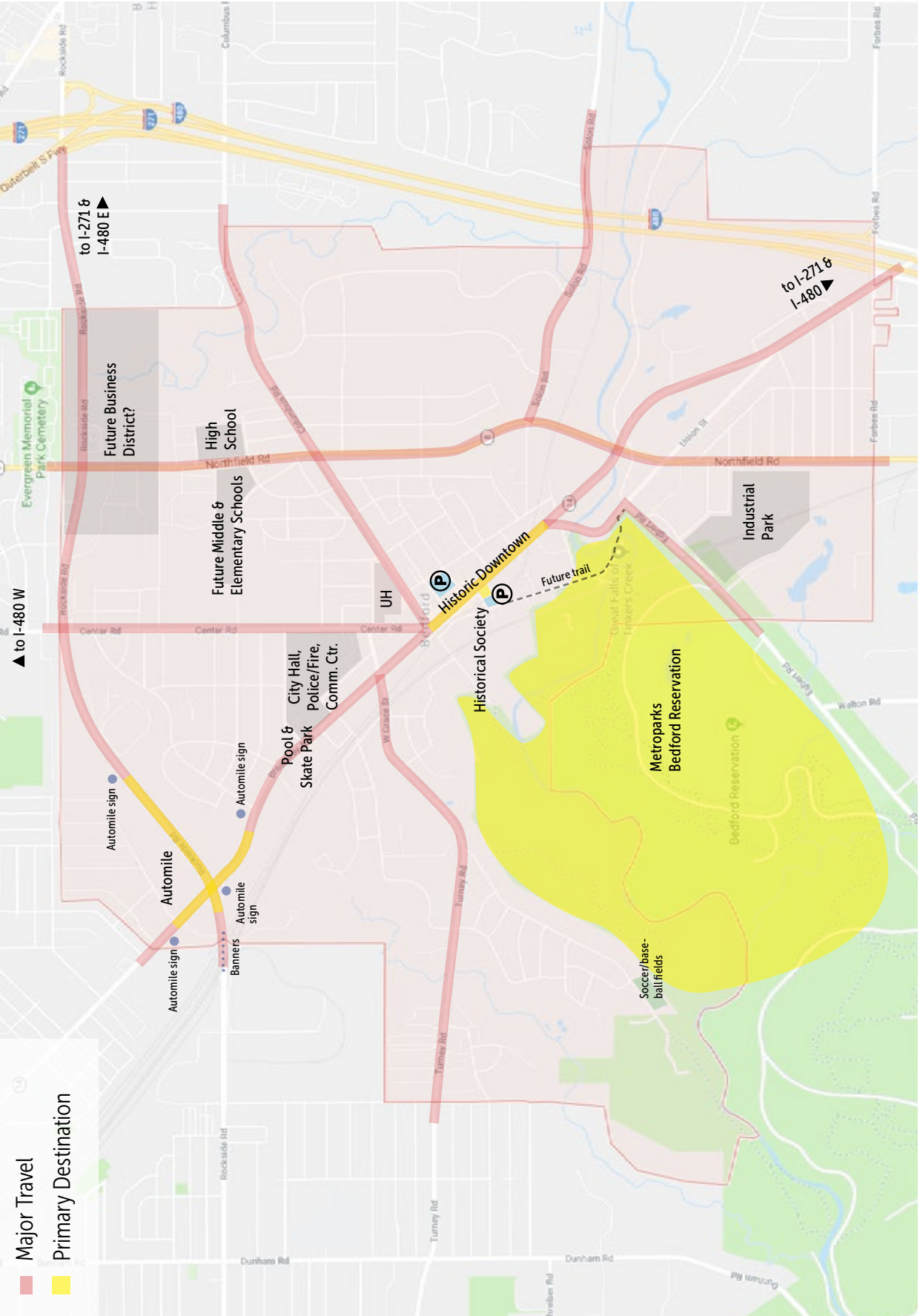
Major Destinations

- Automile
- Bedford High School
- Bedford Reservation Metropark*
- City Hall
- Commons/Square*
- Community Center & Pool
- Court
- Dunham House
- High School*

- Historic Downtown*
- Historical Society*
- Industrial Park
- Library*
- Parks & Playgrounds
- Police Department
- Post Office*
- Skate Park
- UH Bedford Medical Center

Primary (visitor-based) destinations
Drivers traveling at speeds of 25 mph or greater cannot comprehend more than 4-5 messages, therefore, these highlighted destinations have been determined as wayfinding priorities. This does not mean other destinations will never appear on signage at appropriate locations.
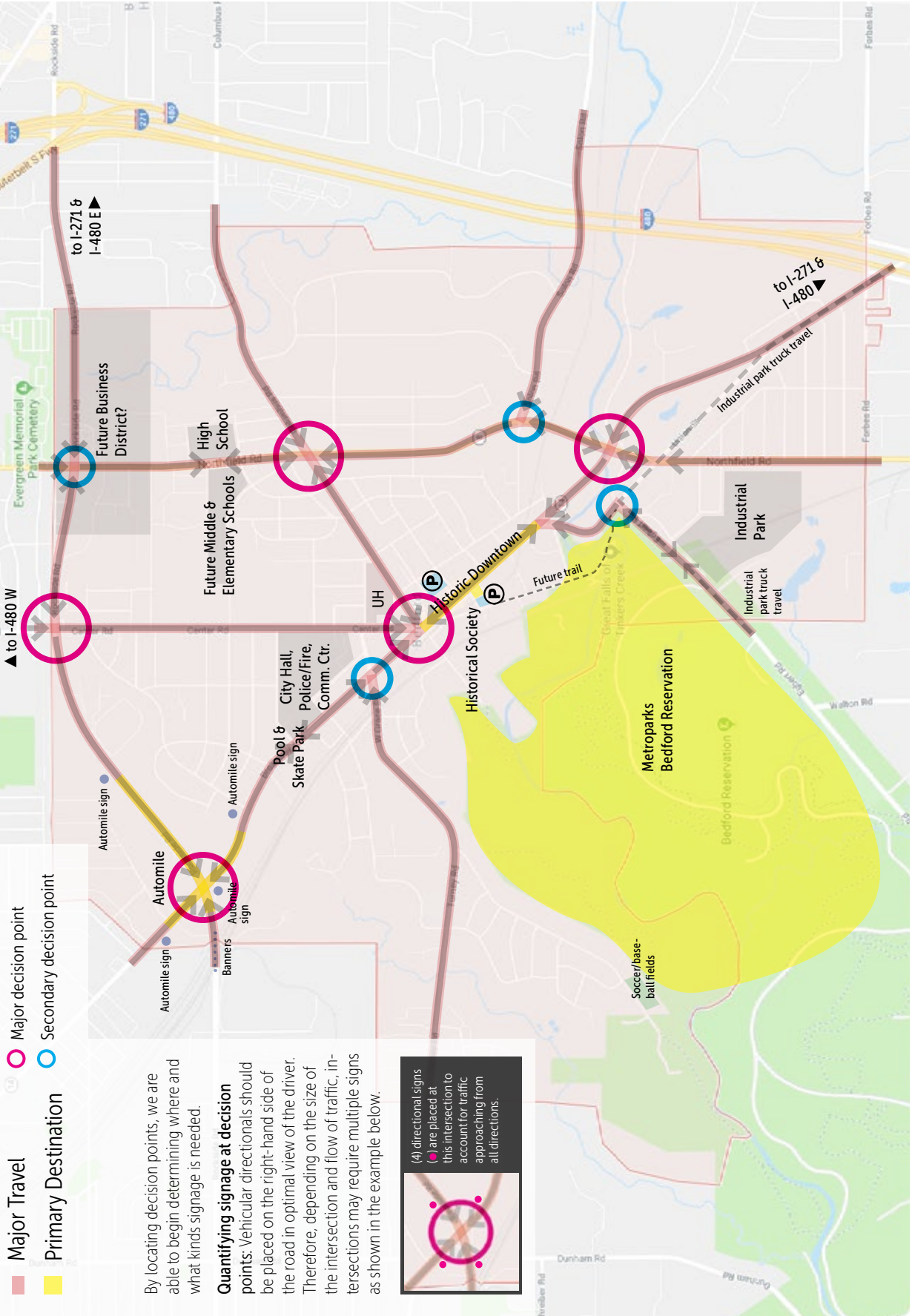
*   **Identified as major pedestrian destinations**

Legend

- Major Travel
- Primary Destination

to I-271 & I-480 E ▲

to I-271 & I-480 ▼

▲ to I-480 W

▲ to I-480 W

Future Business District?

High School

Future Middle & Elementary Schools

Northfield Rd

Northfield Rd

Industrial Park

UH

Historic Downtown

Historical Society

Future trail

Center Rd

Center Rd

Center Rd

City Hall, Police/Fire, Comm. Ctr.

Pool & Skate Park

Metroparks Bedford Reservation

Automile sign

Automile sign

Automile

Automile sign

Automile sign

Banners

Soccer/base-ball fields

Evergreen Memorial Park Cemetery

Rockside Rd

Columbus Rd

Forbes Rd

Forbes Rd

Union St

Solon Rd

Turney Rd

W Grace St

Bedford

Dunham Rd

Dunham Rd

Rockside Rd

Great Falls of Tinkers Creek

Egbert Rd

Primary travel paths have been determined based on major entry roads and primary visitor destinations. Travel paths allow us to begin to see traffic patterns, areas of high volume and decision points where potential directional information is needed.

Major Travel

Primary Destination

to I-271 & I-480 E ▲

▲ to I-480 W

Future Business District?

High School

Future Middle & Elementary Schools

Northfield Rd

Industrial park truck travel

to I-271 & I-480 ▼

Northfield Rd

Industrial Park

UH

Historic Downtown

Historical Society

Future trail

Industrial park truck travel

City Hall, Police/Fire, Comm. Ctr.

Center Rd

Pool & Skate Park

Automile sign

Automile sign

Automile

Automile sign

Automile sign

Banners

Metroparks Bedford Reservation

Soccer/base-ball fields

Major Travel

Primary Destination

Major decision point

Secondary decision point

By locating decision points, we are able to begin determining where and what kinds signage is needed.

Quantifying signage at decision points: Vehicular directionals should be placed on the right-hand side of the road in optimal view of the driver. Therefore, depending on the size of the intersection and flow of traffic, intersections may require multiple signs as shown in the example below.

(4) directional signs are placed at this intersection to account for traffic approaching from all directions.

Map labels:
- to I-271 & I-480 E ▲
- to I-271 & I-480 ▼
- ▲ to I-480 W
- ▲ to I-480 W
- Evergreen Memorial Park Cemetery
- Future Business District?
- High School
- Future Middle & Elementary Schools
- Northfield Rd
- Industrial park truck travel
- Industrial Park
- Industrial park truck travel
- UH
- Historic Downtown
- Historical Society
- Future trail
- City Hall, Police/Fire, Comm. Ctr.
- Pool & Skate Park
- Center Rd
- Great Falls of Tinkers Creek
- Metroparks Bedford Reservation
- Bedford Reservation
- Automile
- Automile sign
- Automile sign
- Automile sign
- Banners
- Automile sign
- Soccer/base-ball fields
- Walton Rd
- Dunham Rd
- Dunham Rd

to I-271 &
I-480 E ▲

▲ to I-480 W

to I-271 &
I-480 ▼

Industrial park truck travel

Future Business
District?

Evergreen Memorial
Park Cemetery

High
School

Future Middle &
Elementary Schools

Historic District
Gateway

Historic Downtown

UH

Center Rd

City Hall,
Police/Fire,
Comm. Ctr.

Pool &
Skate Park

Historic District
Gateway

Historical Society

Future trail

Industrial
Park

Industrial
park truck
travel

Great Falls of
Tinkers Creek

Metroparks
Bedford Reservation

Soccer/base-
ball fields

Automile sign

Automile

Automile
sign

Automile sign

Banners

Northfield Rd

Turney Rd

Dunham Rd

Walton Rd

Major Travel

Primary Destination

● Perceived primary gateway

● Jurisdictional gateway

A perceived entry primary point into a city is different from a jurisdictional entry point (the actual defined boundary). It is the moment—a feeling—when the visitor recognizes they have arrived. Location could be based on nice landscaping, a great view, a landmark, architecture or environmental elements that represent the city's character.

Gateways

Gateway elements support placemaking and identification of your city and key assets within your community. These structures are implemented to establish pride in community and introduce the quality and character of place upon entry.

While signs are placed at jurisdictional boundaries, larger and more elaborate statements are made at points where one psychologically feels as if they have arrived.

Types of Gateways

- Monument Signs
- Post-Mounted Signs
- Banner Programs
- Landscape/Hardscape
- District/Neighborhood Identification
- Public Art Installations

RECOMMENDED SIGN TYPE FAMILY

Gateway Monument

Jurisdictional Gateway
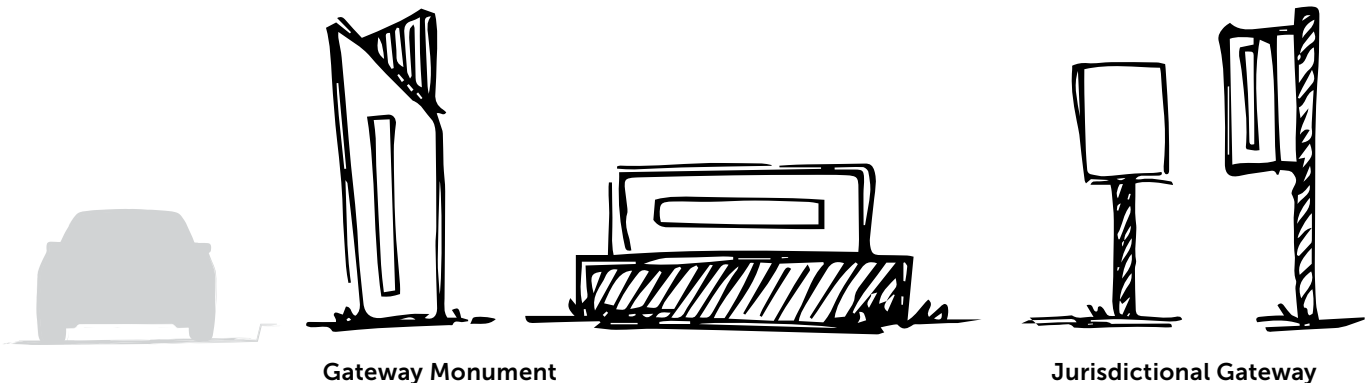
Vehicular Directionals

Vehicular signs and messages are designed to be easily read by people driving at speeds of 25 mph or more. Federal and State guidelines may dictate design, structure and messages.

There can be multiple levels of directional signs that progress from general to specific messages, as well as different scales depending on the surrounding environment and speed of traffic. Since the final destination for vehicular traffic is typically parking many vehicular wayfinding programs include direction to destination based parking and/or public parking.

Types of Vehicular Directionals
- Primary Directionals
- Secondary Directionals
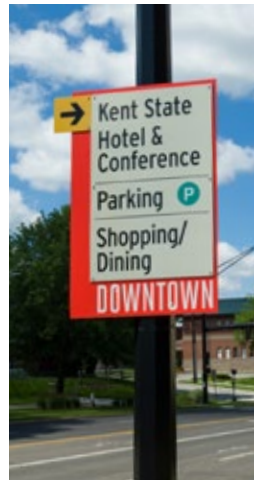
RECOMMENDED SIGN TYPE FAMILY
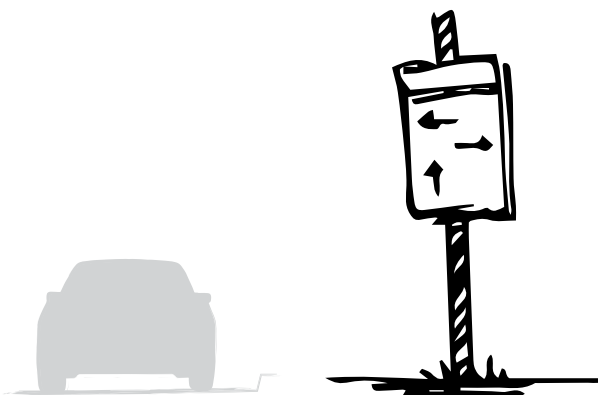
Primary Directional
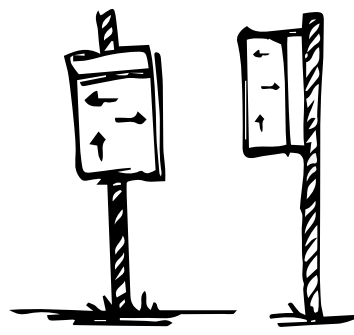
Secondary Directional

Identification

Signage that identifies specific landmarks, assets, and points of interest confirms your visitors' arrival and communicates the level of care and attention that you have invested into your city's destinations.

A consistent identification sign family not only provides wayfinding clarity, but also indicates support and unity by the city, which can help attract business and residents.

Types of Vehicular Identification Signs
· City Owned/Operated Facilities
· City Owned/Operated Parks
· Industrial or Business Parks
· Parking
· Street Signs (Historic Downtown)

RECOMMENDED SIGN TYPE FAMILY

City Facility ID   Park ID   Industrial/Business Park ID   Parking ID
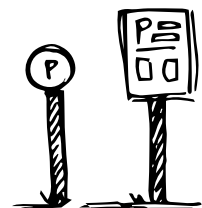
	SIGN TYPE	QTY	UNIT COSTS RANGES *includes fabrication and installation*	TOTAL
PRIORITY / **GATEWAYS**	Perceived/Primary Gateway	6	HIGH | $18,000	$108,000
			LOW | $5,000	$30,000
	Jurisdictional Gateway	7	HIGH | $4,500	$31,500
			LOW | $1,500	$10,500

Including contingency +15% = **$46,575—$160,425**

	SIGN TYPE	QTY	UNIT COSTS RANGES	TOTAL
DIRECTIONALS	Primary Directional	17	HIGH | $4,500	$76,500
			LOW | $3,000	$51,000
	Secondary Directional	7	HIGH | $3,500	$24,500
			LOW | $2,500	$17,500

	SIGN TYPE	QTY	UNIT COSTS RANGES	TOTAL
IDENTIFICATION	City Facility Identification	TBD	HIGH | $8,000	TBD
			LOW | $4,000	TBD
	City Park Identification	13	HIGH | $8,000	$104,000
			LOW | $4,000	$52,000
	Parking Identification	2	HIGH | $4,500	$9,000
			LOW | $2,500	$5,000
	Historic Downtown Street Signs	15	HIGH | $800	$12,000
			LOW | $600	$9,000

NOTES

- Design affects budget as does final programming of your site or community. These numbers are for planning purposes only.
- Quantities are an estimate based on initial study only, final quantities may vary.
- See Appendix for historic project pricing diagrams.
- Implementation phasing can be broken down over a period of years. Typically, communities we have worked with implement over a 4-5 year period depending on the size of their overall sign program.
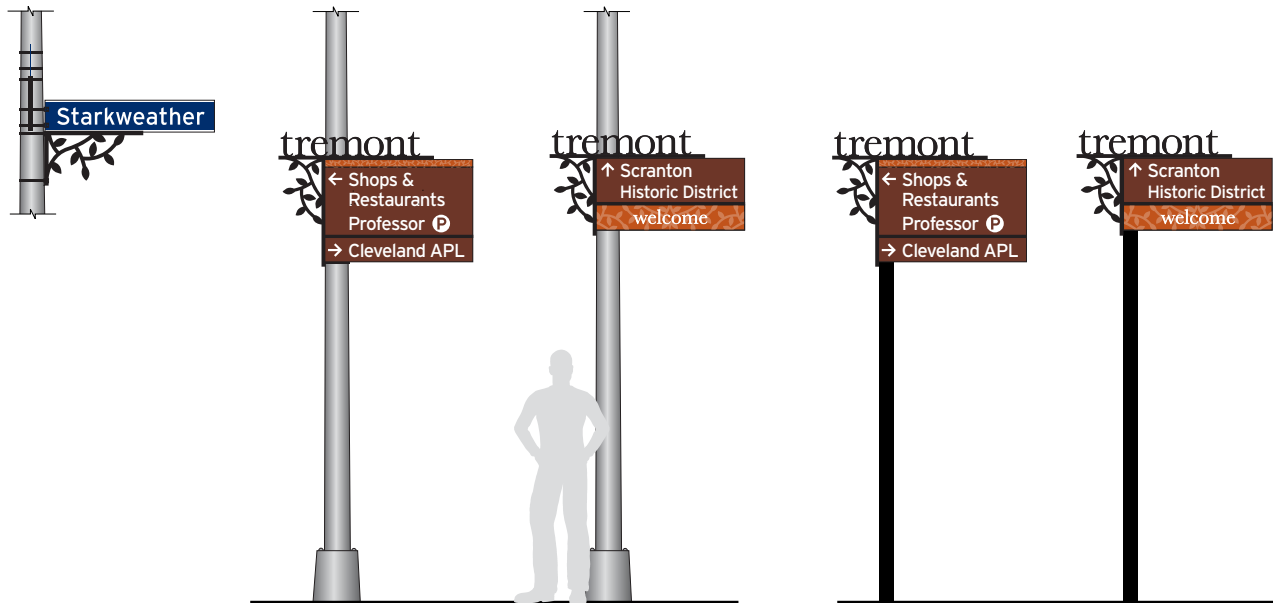
We recommend the Gateways as your highest priority items, meaning if installed, they will provide the most value based on your wayfinding challenges and goals. These can be developed and implemented as a stand alone project.

Tier 1 – Low

Sign designs that leverage flat graphics and simple shapes are cost effective, using single sheets of aluminum in fabrication.

Simpler in design and size, these projects often enhance the existing elements of a wayfinding or signage program instead of starting from scratch, and typically do not include large or elaborate gateway elements. Signs may be attached to existing poles or structures and any new elements would be added to existing signage or posts.
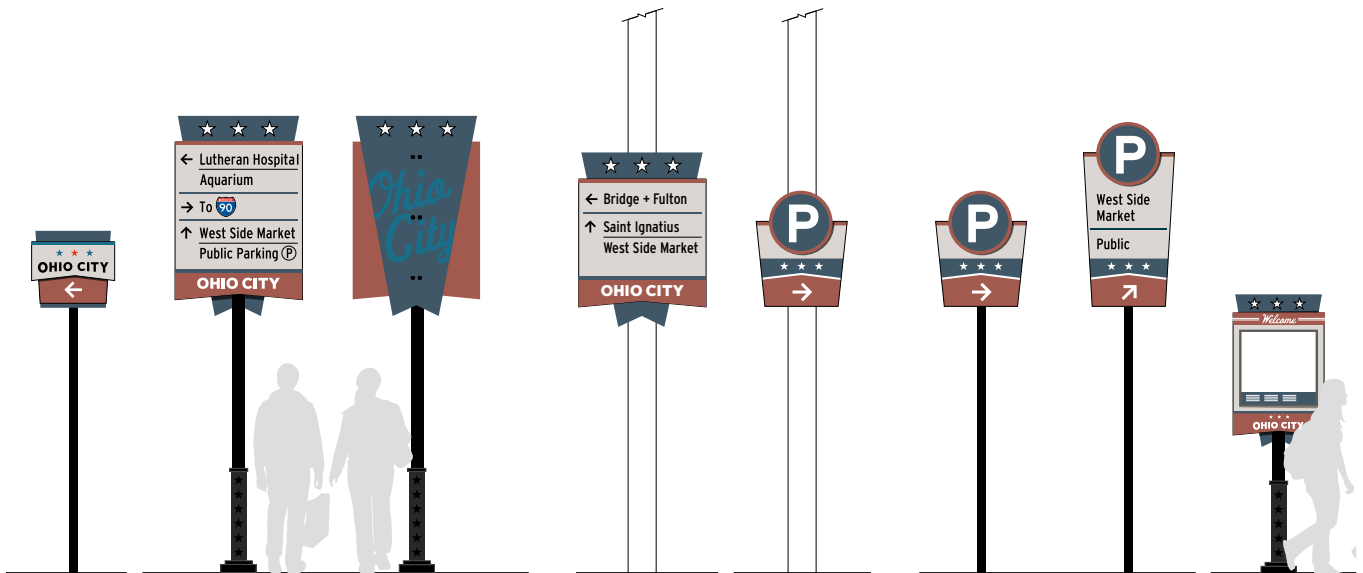
Tier 2 – Medium

Custom shapes and cuts, and light use of masonry or stonework add to the character and the quality (as well as the cost).

While the journey is always a priority no matter the budget, Tier 2 allows for more customization. Decorative posts or fabricated panels that are layered and dimensional allow for a more intricate and higher quality aesthetic within the destination.
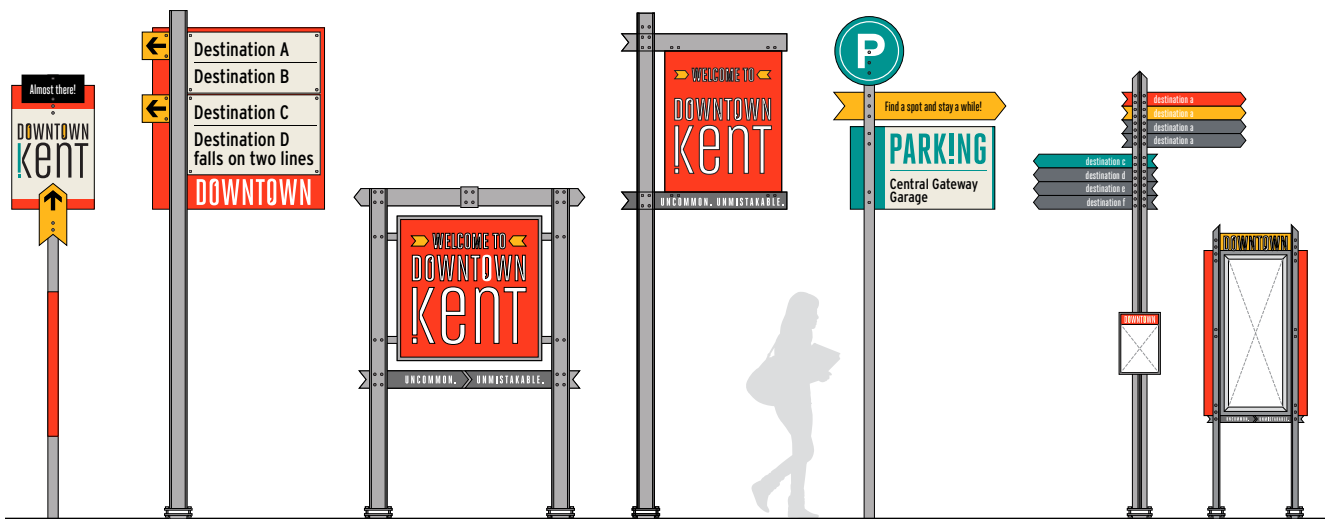
Tier 3 – High

Illuminating signs or adding electrical components, heavy use of masonry or stonework, and large gateway elements beautify the space and create an eye-catching wayfinding program.

In addition to being larger in scope and complexity, these projects often include a higher level of customization, including elaborate shapes, complex designs and unique materials that appeal to a higher aesthetic.

No matter the size of the wayfinding project, there are always considerations and variables that impact scope and budget.

Material Selection

Most exterior signs are built from aluminum, but other higher end materials can be used if the design intent or brand aesthetic calls for it.

Material Usage

Typically the larger amount of material used equals a better cost per unit, essentially buying in bulk and cutting down on waste.

Size and Scale

The size and complexity of signs implemented in a project directly affect the fabrication and installation cost.

Some variables are easier to visualize when looked at through the lens of fabrication. A more complicated signage system with layering and ornate details will drive up cost. In some cases, cities take the responsibility of removing existing signage, but that can also fall on the fabricator, adding to the overall cost. The type of installation required can affect cost. For example, installing a post in soil is typically easier (and less expensive) than installing in concrete or pavement. These are all variables that need to be considered when planning and budgeting for your wayfinding and signage program.
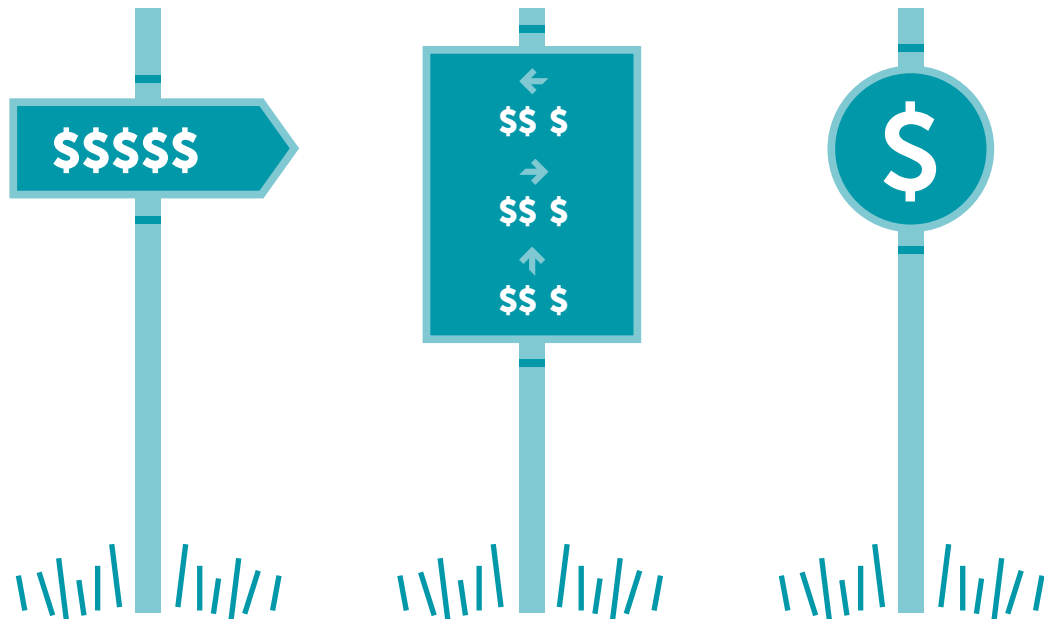
The following sign types have not been included in the initial wayfinding analysis, but may be considered as future additions to the program.

Information Kiosks

If it does not already have a sign program, downtown and the Commons may benefit from a family of pedestrian directionals, information kiosks vehicular and parking signage, etc.

Trail/Bike Signage

While it is typically the responsibility of the organization managing the trail to place signage on the trails themselves, it is important that cities promote themselves and their assets to trail users. Trail users are an additional audience that can be an economic driver for the city.

Banner Program(s)

Banners can be temporary or permanent, or a mixture of both. Not only a placemaking tool, banners can promote events, tell stories and add character to a streetscape. Banners show that something is happening in your community and can even be used as an economic source by selling advertising space to merchants and businesses.

Timeline

The following timeline is a rough estimation. Several factors may affect the timeline including client review and approval, government review processes, bidding process, size and scope of the project, etc.

PHASE 2 12–16 WEEKS

Build Up: Design & Programming

- Kick-off Meeting(s)/Site Visit
- Conceptual Design & Presentation
- Schematic Design (30%) & Presentation
    - Programming Revisions
    - Fabrication Budget Update
- Design Intent (60%) & Presentation
    - Programming Revisions
    - Fabrication Budget Update
- Bid Package (100%)
- Prepare Final Art

PHASE 3 16–24 WEEKS

Move Forward: Implementation

- Bid Process
- Bid Review and Evaluation
- Contractor Meetings & Coordination
- Submittal Reviews
- Fabrication
- Installation
- Punch list
- Final Inspection

Project Approach — Design Development

The following outline is the Scope and Approach to developing a Signage and Wayfinding Program that is ready for Implementation.

The outline and fee takes in the assumptions that we would develop the sign program containing: Gateway Signs, Vehicular Directionals, City/Park Facility Signs, Parking Identification and Historic Downtown Street Signs per the report. Additional sign types or other types of placemaking elements would constitute a separate effort.

Part 1: Design Development

Discovery Visit includes site visit and meeting with the project team: Review the City's sense of place and overall visitor experience.

Sign System Programming based on the Wayfinding Analysis and visit, we will establish coordinated sign messaging with each sign type location. Client team will review and provide consolidated feedback.

Conceptual Design will address functional and aesthetic goals for a beautiful and maintainable program. We will present up to three (3) conceptual design themes for the proposed program. The Client team will select a conceptual direction to move forward and provide consolidated feedback to inform the next phase of development.

- Conceptual Design typically includes hand sketches, support imagery and notations to describe the concepts.
- Based on the selected concept direction, our team will begin to develop the Sign Program.

Sign Type Structures Drawings Provide dimensions and detailed illustrations to demonstrate the look and feel of each sign type are developed. Material and fabrication specifications will be recommended and noted on each drawing. Client team will review and provide consolidated feedback. Any revisions will be presented in the Design Intent Phase.

Design Development is an iterative process. We will present progressive design documentation for review in the following submittal types: Schematic Design and Design Intent.

- **Schematic Design (30%):** With an approved sign design concept and message schedule as our guide, we will develop the recommended sign system family as outlined in the Sign Program Framework. We will begin deeper exploration and presentation of the sign program's character, style, materials and fabrication methods. Sign program budget update is included.
- **Design Intent (60%):** Comments and changes based on the review of the Schematic Design package will be incorporated. Views and details that demonstrate the design intent of each sign type along with sign face and message layout instructions are presented. The location plans and a coordinated message schedule will undergo a final update and may include additional details

If desired, a Public Open House would be appropriate after Schematic Design is approved to generate interest and excitement.

Instructional Sign Type Drawings (100%): For each sign type in the Sign System, we will provide a written narrative of its function, use, any particular modular/changeable capability and an overview drawing of the sign type for reference.

- **Performance Specifications:** Instructional and guidance information for sign contractors in regards to the performance expectations of materials used, fabrication and installation techniques, warranty requirements as well as maintenance information/instructions. such as location conditions, installation needs and requirements.

Project Approach — Implementation

Part 2: Implementation (Optional)

Bid Management

This phase addresses the implementation of your program. Our team helps you select the most appropriate fabrication partner, monitors the construction process to ensure the design intent is upheld and reviews the program once it is installed to make sure it is completed to the quality and standards that you expect.

- **Bid Review and Evaluation:** The project team will review submitted proposals and provide the client with a compilation of project bids and evaluation report, along with a formal recommendation for the project award.

Implementation Oversight

Our team will review colors, materials, fabrication methods, including shop drawings and message layouts from the fabricator. We will red-line shop drawings and review materials and mock-ups to confirm that all submitted items comply with our design intent. We will perform inspections at the fabricator's shop as well as in the field during the installation process.

Services and tasks during this phase of work include:

- Meeting with selected contractor(s) for start of work to review all program documents.
- Manage contractor relationships, schedule and on-site coordination.
- Review, approve and submit contractor and professional pay applications.
- Sign Location verification and walk-through with client and contractor.
- Oversee progress of fabrication.
- Oversee progress on content population and deployment of digital media components.
- Oversee progress of installation.
- Survey finished project; prepare detailed punch list.

Professional Fees

Part 1: Design Development $18,000–$20,000
Includes (2) on-site visits
Final deliverable: Sign Program Bid Package

Part 2: Implementation (optional) $7,000–$9,000
Includes (2) on-site visits
Pre-Fabrication walk-through with Client and Selected Sign Contractor
Post Installation walk-through with Client