Owen Sound

Wayfinding strategy

owen sound
where you *want* to live

Fathom

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Fathom collaborates at all scales from sign designs and museum exhibits, to large residential buildings, up to comprehensive master plans for university campuses and downtowns.

Fathom

Prepared for

City of Owen Sound
Paul McGrath
Manager of Community & Business Development
W: 519-376-4440 ext. 1254

Prepared by

Anna-Gabrielle Tremblay
Adam Fine
Daisy Zhang
Ming Zhao

Fathom Studio
40 King St.
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
902 461 2525
fathomstudio.ca

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- Draft 3—2022-08-08
- Final—2023-02-06

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01 Introduction

1.1 Project context

This project is a strategic look at wayfinding in Owen Sound—to determine how best to ensure that visitors and residents alike are able to safely navigate within the city and find its public assets such as parks, River District, trails, and waterfront. Wayfinding provides a sense of place and makes the city more welcoming. Wayfinding signage creates tremendous value for visitors, who will better be able to take advantage of your assets, but also for residents—and new residents—who will be more informed about all there is to do.

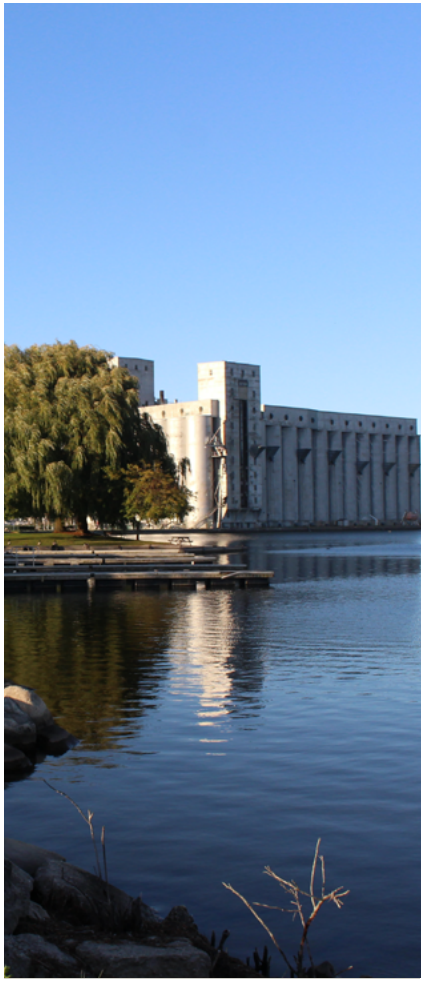
Signage has many functions. It can attract visitors, provide direction, inform and educate. It links visitors with the available experiences in an area. Tourism destinations invest a lot in marketing and creating experiences, but the same destinations often fail to make improvements to their signage. To ensure that tourism benefits the local community and economy, visitors to the area need to be given direction to find what they're looking for.

In this project, we are not designing a new wayfinding sign system. Since 2011, municipalities in Bruce, Grey and Simcoe Counties (under the Regional Tourism Organization 7 or RTO7) have been implementing a common sign system on roads, trails, and in urban areas. The guidelines in the *RTO7 Wayfinding Signage Standards and Specifications* document are now very well implemented, with hundreds of signs installed in many municipalities, both urban and rural. Using the existing RTO7 sign system designs enables access to infrastructure funding, but more importantly, it ties Owen Sound into a system that is consistent throughout the region. Visitors don't know or care about boundaries, and a consistent regional wayfinding system provides a seamless experience for visitors from neighbouring municipalities and beyond.

Some of the primary tasks in the project have been:

- mapping the town's assets and determining which destinations are appropriate to include in the system
- analyzing the current state of signage in Owen Sound—what signs exist and in what condition are they?
- designing a custom-branded community header for Owen Sound, required for several sign types in the RTO7 wayfinding system
- deciding which RTO7 sign types are appropriate for Owen Sound, noting which new designs may be required outside the existing system
- planning out a complete program of sign installations with recommended locations, messaging, and priority

Wayfinding signage is a large investment for any municipality. It requiring years of commitment, proper planning, implementation to achieve. Owen Sound's Official Plan and River District Action Plan both recommend wayfinding signage to meet their objectives. This document provides the city the guidance the city needs to implement a solid, consistent, functional wayfinding system for years to come. As new asset or destinations are added to the city, related signage should follow similar standards.



1.2 What is wayfinding?

Wayfinding is a set of strategies to help point visitors in the right direction. People who return to the same places day after day, month after month, don't need much help finding their way. But visitors and newcomers who are looking for a destination in an unfamiliar place will need some cues to get to their intended destination.

Wayfinding isn't just signs, though signs are often a big part of wayfinding projects. The trail, the location of an exit, the perceived direction of a road, the location of building entrances, the presence of landmarks, and other environmental cues are all very important to wayfinding.

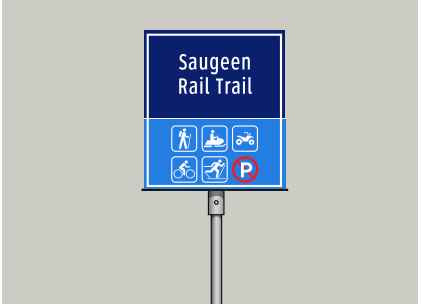
The art of wayfinding is reading the landscape and anticipating the decision points: the places where a visitor may be required to make a decision of which way to go. At or near the decision points, we may need to intervene and guide the visitor on the right path. Decision points could occur at intersections, forks in a trail, or at some change of transportation mode, like in a parking lot where people are getting out of their cars to walk.

Wayfinding is also about destinations, what name to use, when, and whether to use names or symbols or both. Including every possible destination on a sign is impossible, so wayfinding is about prioritizing what destinations to highlight, at what point in a person's travel.

For signs, there are six functional types:

1. **Directional signs** point the way to a destination (or to several). Destinations may be large (e.g. a downtown area) and small (e.g. a public washroom). Typically, directional signs lead the way with the name of a destination—name or symbol or both—and an arrow, but may include trailblazing signs and distance markers.
2. **Identification (ID) signs** identify a place, district, destination, building, etc. ID signs serve two functions: (1) indicating to the visitor that they have arrived, and (2) naming that destination.
3. **Information signs** provide additional information not easily delivered with simple messaging and directional information. Information signs may include maps, and content intended to inform, describe, or draw attention to.
4. **Traffic control signs** are typically governed by national or provincial code. Using universally understood colour and shape, these signs signal the driver to changes in driving conditions by providing warning and guidance information. Though we have to consider the presence of traffic control signs, these are generally controlled by provincial regulation—we do not design or program them in our wayfinding projects.

Directional signs direct the traveller with arrows, and a combination of text and symbols



Identification signs inform a visitor that they have arrived at a destination.

5. **Regulatory signs** point out things that visitors may, must or may not do in a place. Such signs include site specific information, for example in parks and on trails; others are universal (like speed control) or regional (parking control.)
6. **Interpretive signs** similar in nature to information signs, interpretive signs provide context for the visitor, and inform on the cultural heritage of a place.

For ease of comprehension of message, it is best to avoid combining any of the above in a single sign panel, though some kiosk-like signs may do so.

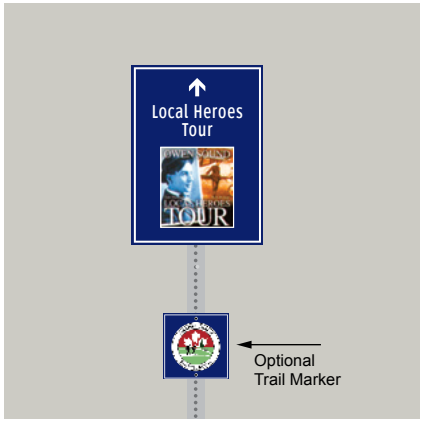
Modality

People move through the environment using different means, often using more than one mode in a journey. Taking the bus means walking to the bus stop. Getting out for a trail-ride may mean driving your bicycle to the trailhead. Wayfinding signs may be geared to one mode or another, and often wayfinding systems require different sign families to address different modes.

Expectations differ depending on how the user is travelling:

- People in motor vehicles receive information while they are in motion. They need to see, process, and react long before a turn or lane-change is required. Vehicles may be travelling at high speed, and as such, highway wayfinding needs very large type, brief messaging, and very little graphics. Motor vehicle signs are always single-sided and installed with the sign perpendicular to the path of travel.
- People on bicycles may be travelling between 10–35 km/h depending on fitness level. Cycling wayfinding signs may look similar to road signs, as riders prefer to receive information while in motion. Unlike people in motor vehicles, cyclists may stop to read more detailed information if presented infrequently. Like signs for motor vehicles, cycling signs are generally installed perpendicular to the path of travel.
- Pedestrian wayfinding generally assumes that people are able to stop and read, or process information on a map. Speeds of pedestrians are low (generally less than 5 km/h on flat terrain), but vary significantly by age, fitness, and mobility needs. Pedestrian signs are often installed parallel to the path of travel, so that people must turn to read the signs as they pass.

Information signs combine maps, text, and symbols to communicate information.



Regulatory signs communicate expected behaviour and regulations along with items of interest, such as hours of operation.

1.3 Traditional wayfinding in a mobile and digital time

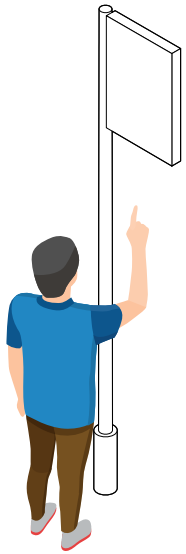
Are signs still necessary?

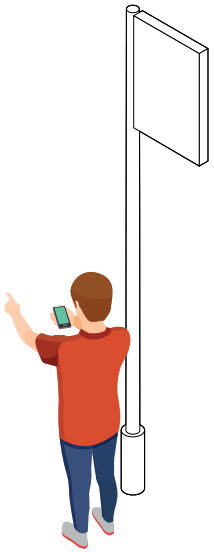
Digital wayfinding tools are a supplement to conventional media such as signage. Smartphone adoption continues to grow, and the availability of data connections and databases of points of interest continues to improve. But allowing people to navigate by observing their surroundings, instead of relying on devices, fosters appreciation and knowledge of the environment in a way that digital wayfinding does not.

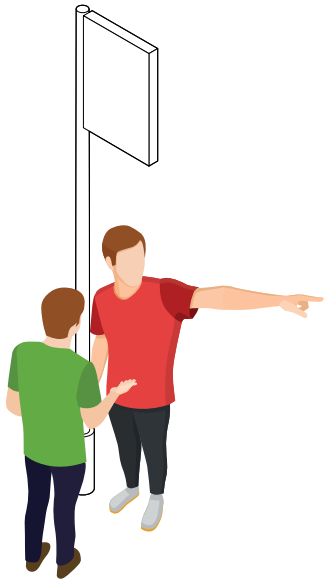
Despite the availability of GPS to travellers, there's nothing like wayfinding signage to assure you of your destination, or that you're headed in the right direction. It provides a sense of place and a welcoming environment—enabling visitors to arrive at their destination safely, find the services they need or want, and leave with a positive perception of the community. And for residents, signage can instill a sense of community pride and even raise awareness of less-known amenities nearby.

Unlike device-based wayfinding, which is dominated by technology giants Google and Amazon, signage can be designed by municipalities for citizens, reflecting values of inclusion and civic orientation rather than the more commercially-driven approach of the tech giants.

We see digital mapping as serving a different role than sign-based wayfinding we present in this project. Mapping apps are generally best at searching, while carefully curated physical maps are better at providing context and heads-up guidance as people move through your place. People moving through a space







Will people use signs?

Yes, and no. Many people use signs when they are properly designed and sited. Signage is ubiquitous in urban and rural settings, and is universally understood to provide useful information. That said, there is a segment of the population that will not look at signs. Some may not understand the language, others may have poor sight. Some prefer to ask questions, while others choose a heads down approach, using technology instead. Signage will benefit many, but will not serve all.

may have many different goals and destinations. To understand the breadth of wayfinding objectives, we can look at some common scenarios.

Efficient navigation to known destination

The first wayfinding scenario that springs to mind is when someone knows where they want to go—a specific amenity, a community or a street address—but don't know the best route. In this case, their goal is to find a quick and reasonably pleasant route that gets them to their destination. A new resident for example, or a resident unfamiliar with other areas of the region.

Locating a type of service when you don't know the location

A different case might be when someone knows what they want to do but don't know where it is located. For example, someone might want to visit a library, relax in a park, or find a meal, but they do not know exactly where such destinations are.

Looking to explore

Some journeys are less task-driven, and are more of an exploration. Someone may want to explore a part of the city/town/place they don't know well, take a walk to relax, or just see the sights. In this case they may know they are looking for a varied, stimulating environment that is rewarding to walk through, without seeking out a particular amenity or destination.

Evaluating different modes of transport

Another scenario is evaluating what mode of transport to take. Should one walk or drive? Can a person park and proceed on foot? Is the path to get there steep or possibly inaccessible? Will multiple car trips be necessary? Which is quicker—walking to a transit terminal serving many routes, or waiting at a bus stop serving a few. Wayfinding is not just choosing a route—it also can guide people to choose one mode or another.

What wayfinding does

When done well, wayfinding makes moving through a place seem effortless and welcoming. When poorly done or nonexistent, people leave feeling confused and frustrated. By making people more comfortable in public spaces, wayfinding may encourage more people to choose sustainable transportation modes (cycling, wheeling, walking, busing) more frequently.

Building a sense of place

Wayfinding can contribute to a sense of place. Unlike the uniform world of online mapping, wayfinding is part of the varied urban and regional experience; the distinctive street signs of Paris, the hallmark look of the London Underground are indicators of place. Wayfinding tools like signs and maps are a powerful, long-lasting part of a place's image. Unlike a logo or visual identity which is merely applied to objects in the environment, wayfinding is part of the urban fabric, just like roads, storefronts and public spaces.

1.4 Changeable digital signs

When doing wayfinding plans, many municipalities ask about digital signage—screens with changeable messages. While we understand their purpose and appeal, in general, we find them:

- too infrequently updated
- presenting messages of limited interest
- duplicating messages on other signs
- distracting to motorists—at night, the lit display is often brighter than the sign it's attached to (see photo at right)
- a distraction from more important, permanent sign messages (e.g. the facility's name)
- expensive and prone to failure

Most importantly, *digital displays almost never provide a wayfinding function*. More typically, they communicate marketing messages, which are secondary to a wayfinding sign's purpose.

We generally advise against them for the reasons above, though it is certainly possible to integrate them into certain sign types, such as facility ID signs.

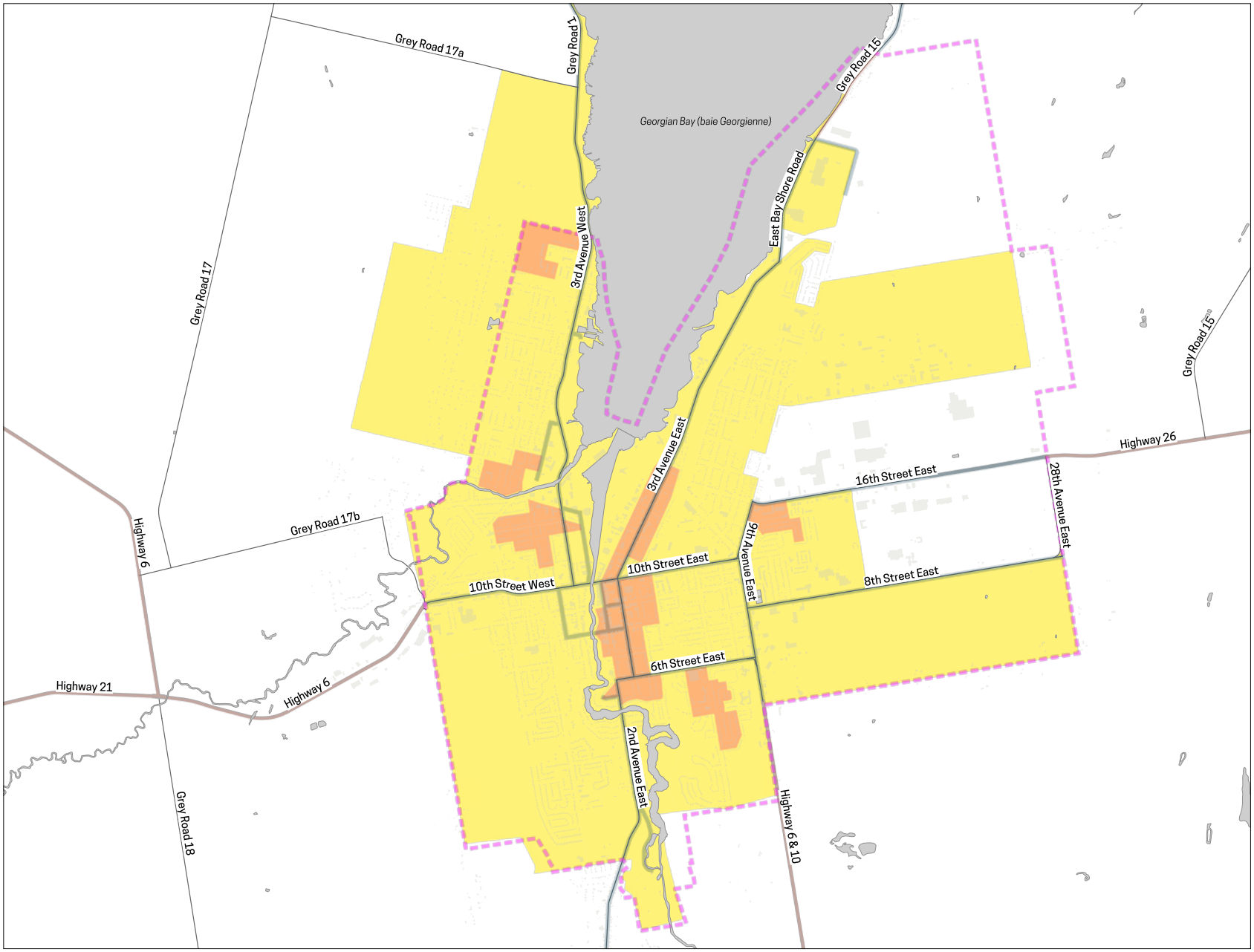
02 Discovery

2.1 Analysis of existing conditions

An essential part of the wayfinding planning process is getting an impression of the place. During a two-day visit to Owen Sound, experiential graphic designer, Anna-Gabrielle Tremblay explored the city's streets on foot and in a vehicle, noting challenges to orientation and opportunities to create or improve wayfinding. Upon her return to our office, Fathom's team did further analysis by mapping GIS data while examining what signs exist already, what problems need to be solved, and what tools we have at hand. The following pages outline some of our observations and analysis.

2.2 Density and structure

Owen Sound is a small urban centre, two hours away from Toronto, in Grey County. It is a regional sports and cuture hub and has a variety of attractions, including numerous trails and waterfalls. It is a small compact city with 21,612 people living in 24.21 square kilometres: a density of 892.6 people/ km². Higher density neighbourhoods within the city are mainly along the river with suburban densities extending out to the municipal boundaries (see map below). The Sydenham River and Georgian Bay divide the city in half along its vertical axis, and four road bridges limit the number of crossings possible between east and west. The Mill Dam and a bridges in Harrison Park provides a fifth and sixth pedestrian crossings in the southern reaches of the city. The Pottawatomi River divides the western half of the city further between north and south.


Grey Road 17a
Grey Road 1
Georgian Bay (baie Georgienne)
Grey Road 15
East Bay Shore Road
3rd Avenue West
Grey Road 17
Grey Road 15
3rd Avenue East
Highway 26
16th Street East
28th Avenue East
Highway 6
Grey Road 17b
9th Avenue East
10th Street East
10th Street West
8th Street East
6th Street East
Highway 21
Highway 6
2nd Avenue East
Grey Road 18
Highway 6 & 10
Map
Density
residential density (DA 2016 census)
1–64 units/km2
64–1383 units/km2
1383–5000 units/km2
5000–99999 units/km2
boundary
0
0.8
1.6 km
CRS
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2.3 Existing signs

On the following pages, we show some examples of existing signs throughout the city. Not surprisingly, there is a concentration of signs of all types in and around settlement areas and near significant nodes of interest.

Directional signs

The city relies heavily on generic white-on-blue blade directionals, which are not part of the RTO7 wayfinding system. The directional signs in the city centre have several notable issues:

- There are too many destinations on each sign—they cannot be read while travelling at speed, which limits their effectiveness but is also a safety hazard.
- Many signs are placed too close to the intersection. There is not enough time to read, consider and react in vehicle.

Other types

- Parking lot ID signs have too many messages, unclear hierarchy of information, and too many different type treatments (bold, reverse contrast, large text).
- Community ID signs are of varying styles.
- Trail signs do not follow a cohesive or consistent style.
- Major parks are well identified with signs but inconsistent in style.

Gateway sign

Common blade-type street signs
Many of the existing directional signs in the municipality were of this type.

Parking signage
The municipality has large parking ID signs. The information presented is fine but the hierarchy of information makes these difficult to read and understand.

Trail regulatory signs
Sign posts do double and triple-duty, carrying signs of all different types. There is little consistency and often too much information presented at each location.

Park IDs
Owen Sound's parks are well identified but signs were of many different types and styles.

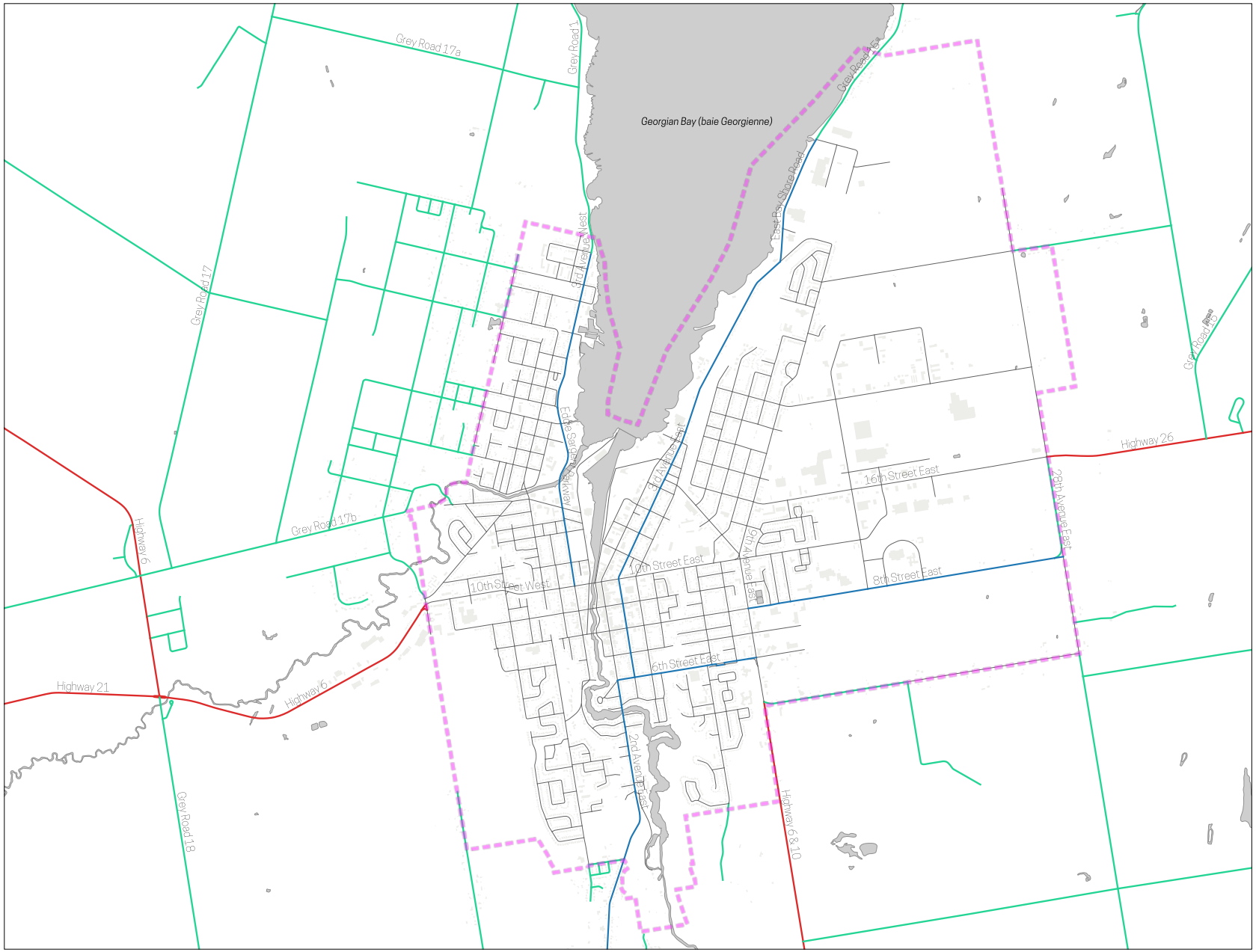
Trailhead and directory signs
Like park ID signs above, trails and park information signs are very inconsistent, and the information presented is not user-centred.

Directionals (cont.)
Signs had inconsistent type treatments with normal or condensed text in various fonts and weights. Some destinations were paired with pictograms that are too small to be useful. One sign,"Billy Bishop V.C. Home" above right, has text which is unacceptably condensed.

2.4 Road jurisdiction

Road jurisdiction matters a great deal to the implementation of wayfinding systems. Some jurisdictions (notably the Province of Ontario) do not allow custom wayfinding signs of any kind on their roads. Fortunately, in the case of Owen Sound, the city owns almost all roads within its boundaries. Grey County also works within the RTO7 wayfinding system, and would support wayfinding signage on county roads throughout the city.

The map opposite shows the ownership structure of roads running through and around Owen Sound, with provincial roads shown in red.



Map

Jurisdiction

roads (jurisdiction)

- Owen Sound
- MTO
- Grey
- private
- other municipalities
- boundary

0 0.8 1.6 km

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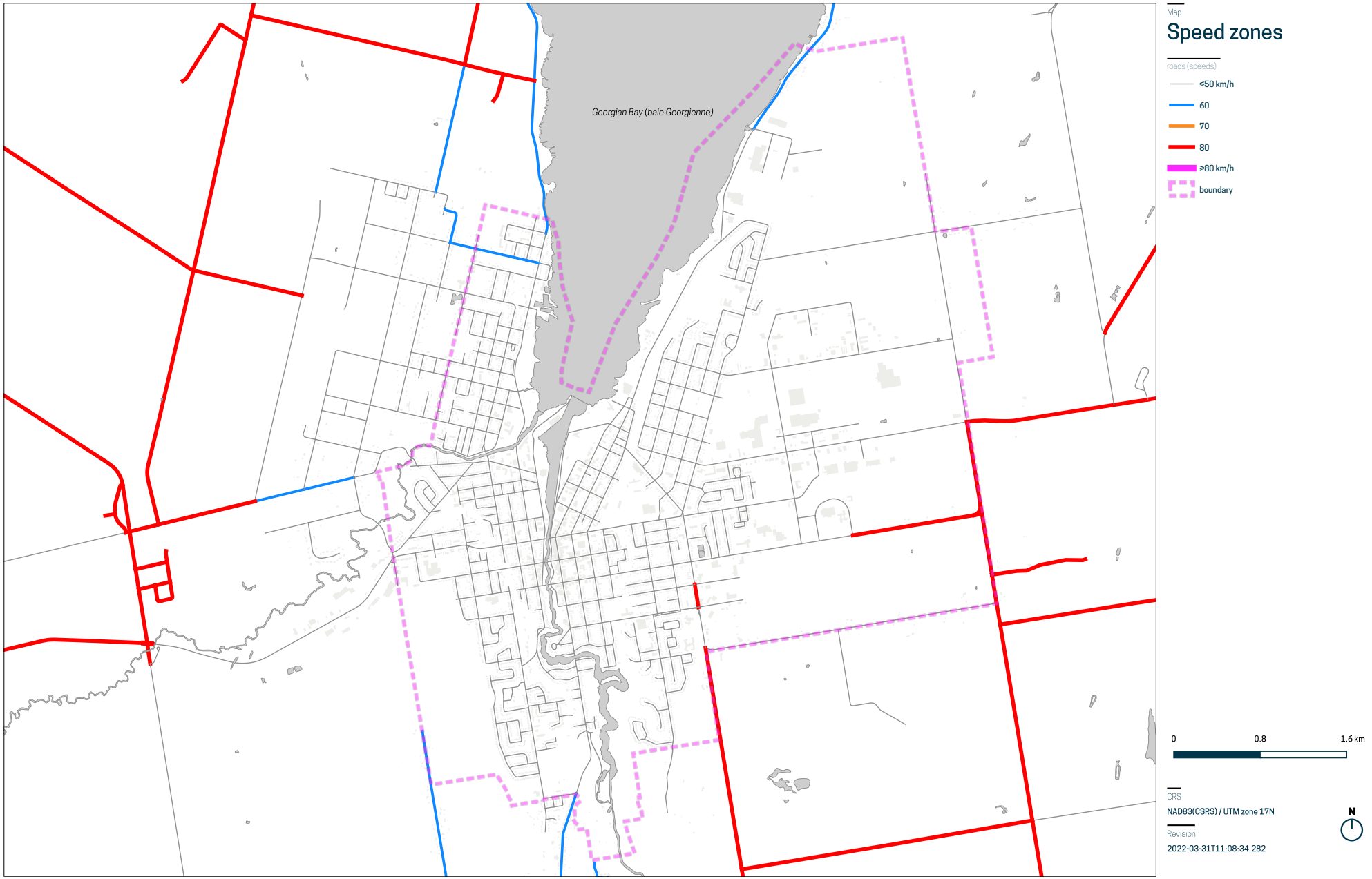
2.5 Speed zones

As should be clear from the map below, Owen Sound is a low-speed municipality. Almost all roads are 50 km/h or lower with only a few higher speed routes along the city's edges. Wayfinding signs for vehicles must scale with the road speeds—faster speeds require much larger signs for legibility—and for Owen Sound we are able to rely mostly on smaller sign structures.


Georgian Bay (baie Georgienne)
Map
Speed zones
roads (speeds)
≤50 km/h
60
70
80
≥80 km/h
boundary
0
0.8
1.6 km
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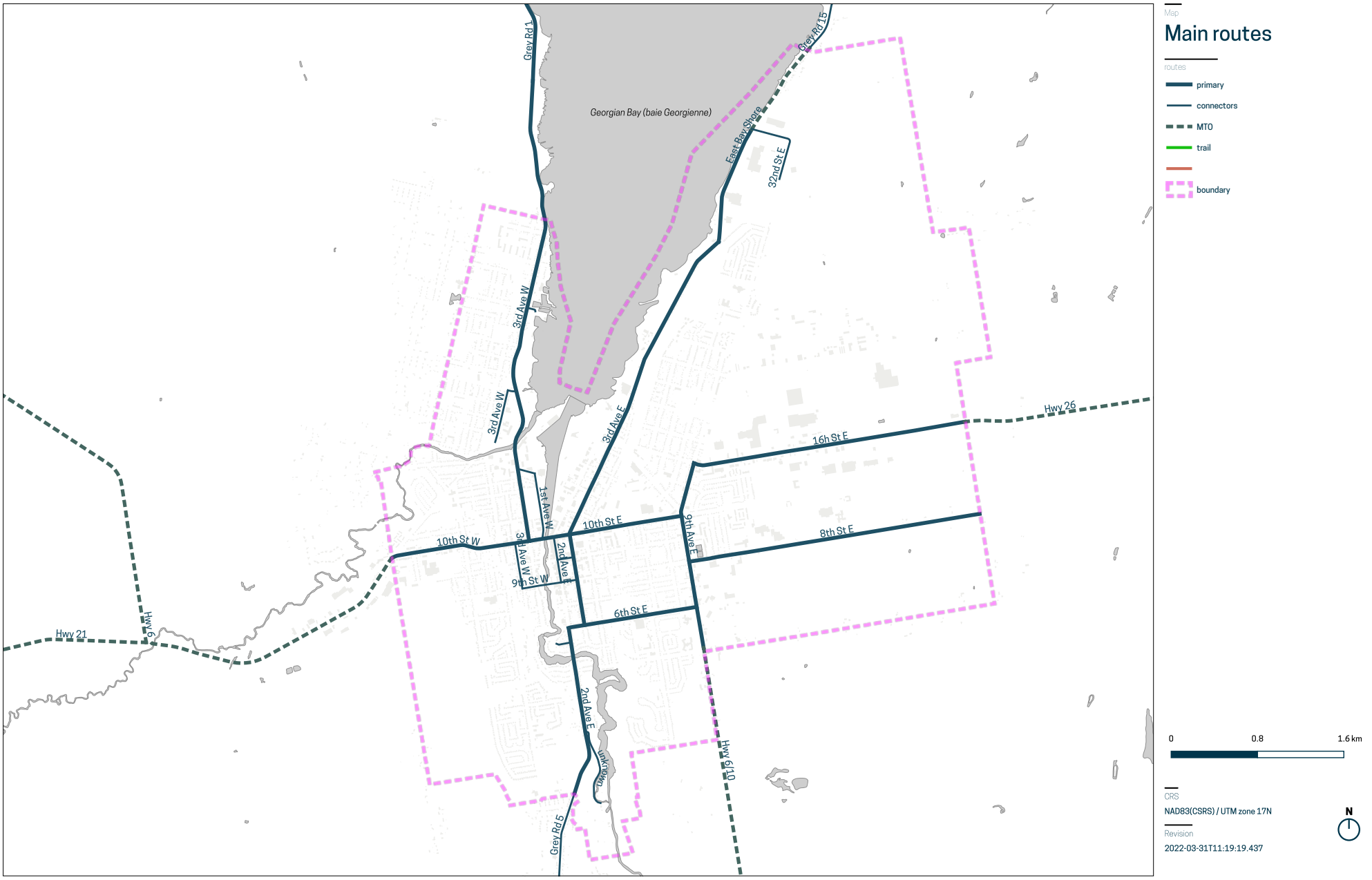
2.6 Main routes

Signs are expensive to install, require ongoing maintenance and repair, and take up space in your rights-of-way. It's neither possible nor desirable to sign every road through Owen Sound. To ensure an efficient wayfinding programme, we determine which roads are most important and focus wayfinding efforts on those routes. The roads selected on the map below were selected in discussion with municipal staff based on their fulfilling one or more of the following criteria:

- higher-traffic
- well used by visitors
- make important connections to destinations or parking

The routes shown here are also supported through the official plan. Selecting routes is necessary to ensure the efficiency of the system—signs should be seen and usable by as many people as possible and provide a strong purpose.


Georgian Bay (baie Georgienne)
Grey Rd 1
Grey Rd 15
East Bay Shore
32nd St E
3rd Ave W
3rd Ave E
16h St E
Hwy 26
1st Ave W
10th St E
9th Ave E
8th St E
10th St W
3rd Ave W
2nd Ave E
9th St W
6th St E
Hwy 21
Hwy 6
2nd Ave E
Hwy 6/10
Grey Rd 5
Map
Main routes
routes
primary
connectors
MTO
trail
boundary
0
0.8
1.6 km
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2.7 Main entry points

There are three primary entry points to Owen Sound:

- Highway 6 & 21 from the west to 10th St W
- Highway 6 & 10 from the south to 9th Ave E
- Highway 26 from the east to 16th St E

Secondary entry points are from county roads:

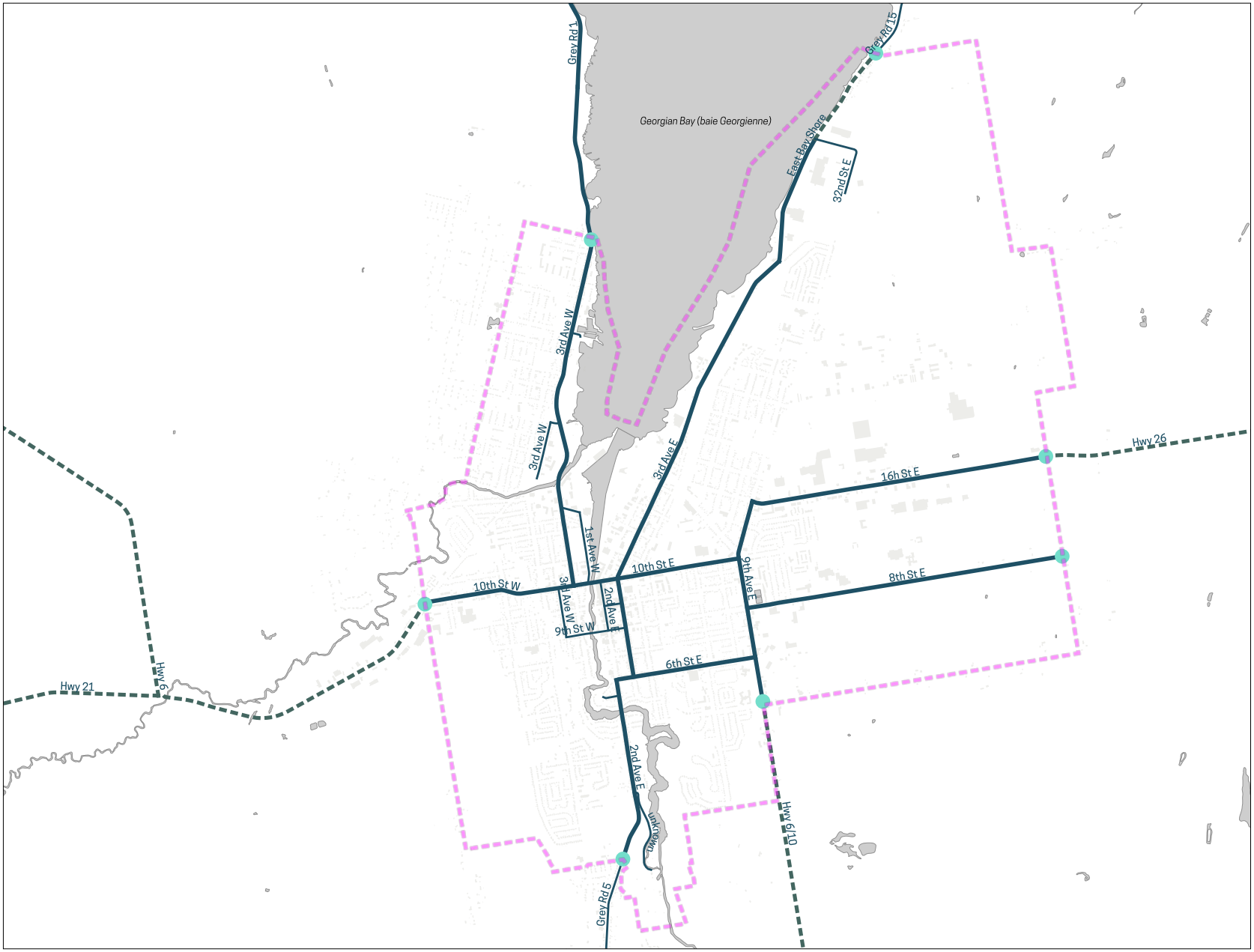
- Grey County 1 from the northeast to 3rd Ave W
- Grey County 5 from the south to 2nd Ave E

There are several other tertiary entry points identified as less important, including the following:

- Grey County 15
- 8th St E / Grey County 5

These are important points where users will enter the city's wayfinding system. They are also places where gateway signs may be necessary to let visitors know they have crossed a threshold from one municipality to another.

Tertiary entry points do not generally justify the expense of gateway sign installations—they are more likely to be of interest only to locals and do not require the larger welcome provided for visitors on main routes.



Map

Entry points

route_points

- entry
- boundary

0 0.8 1.6 km

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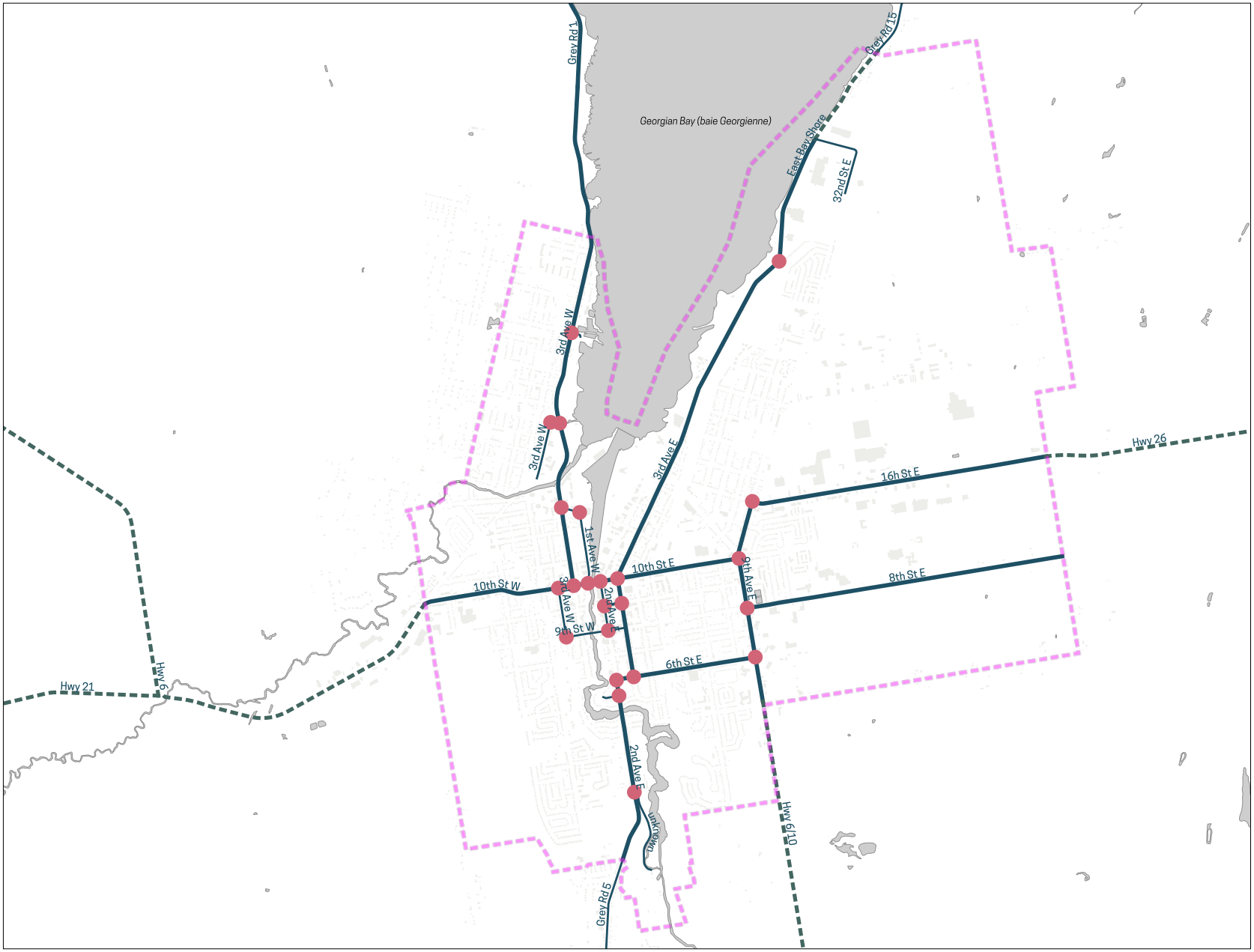
2.8 Decision points

Directional signs are placed where people need the information—at a decision point. Decision points tend to be around intersections or where people make the change from one mode of transportation to another, such as parking lots or trailheads. On the map opposite, there is a decision point marked wherever primary routes cross.



Map

Decision points

route_points

- decision
- boundary

0 0.8 1.6 km

CRS

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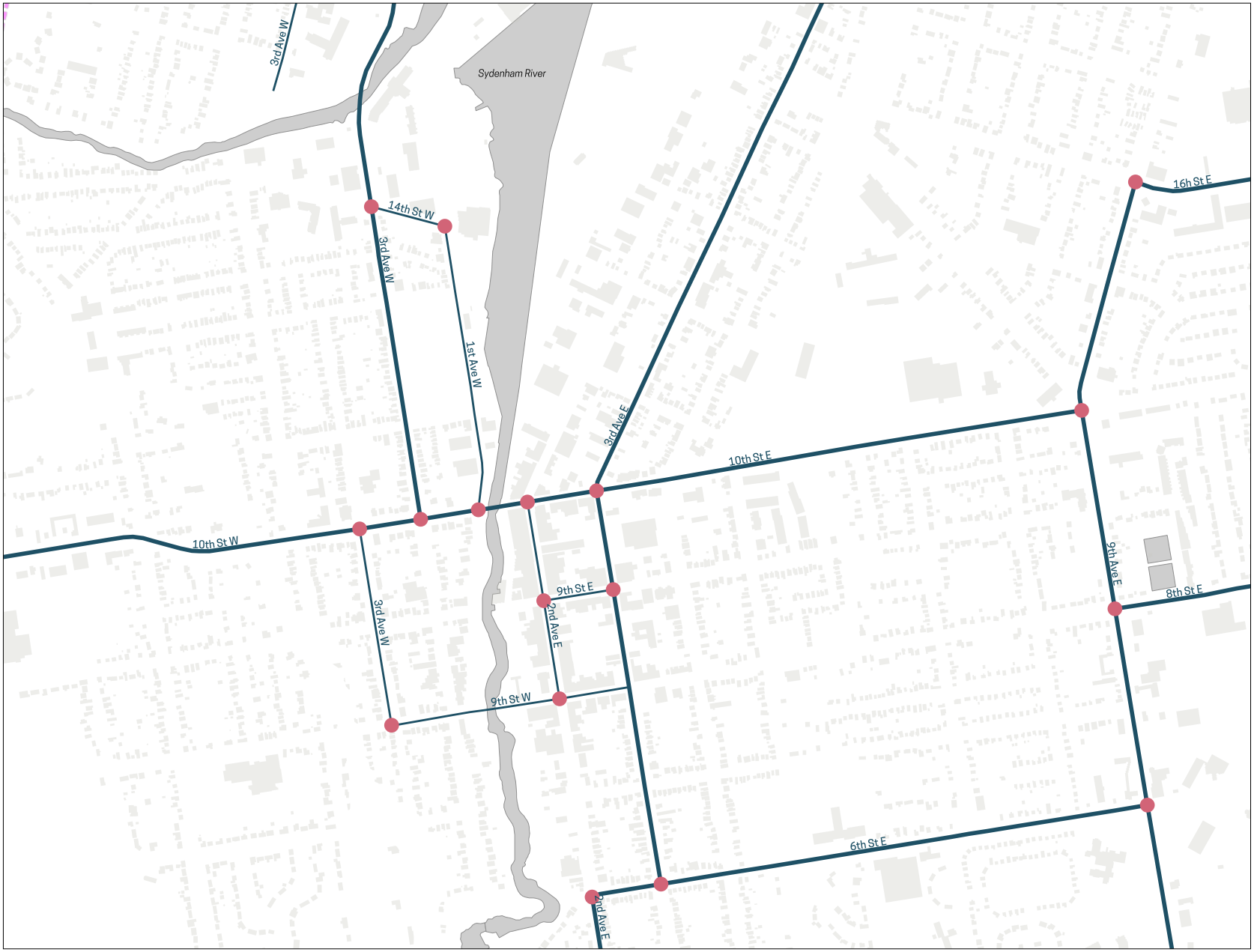
On the map following, we show a detail of decision points at the centre of the city, including the River District.



Map

Decision points—detail

route_points

- decision
- boundary

0 0.2 0.4 km

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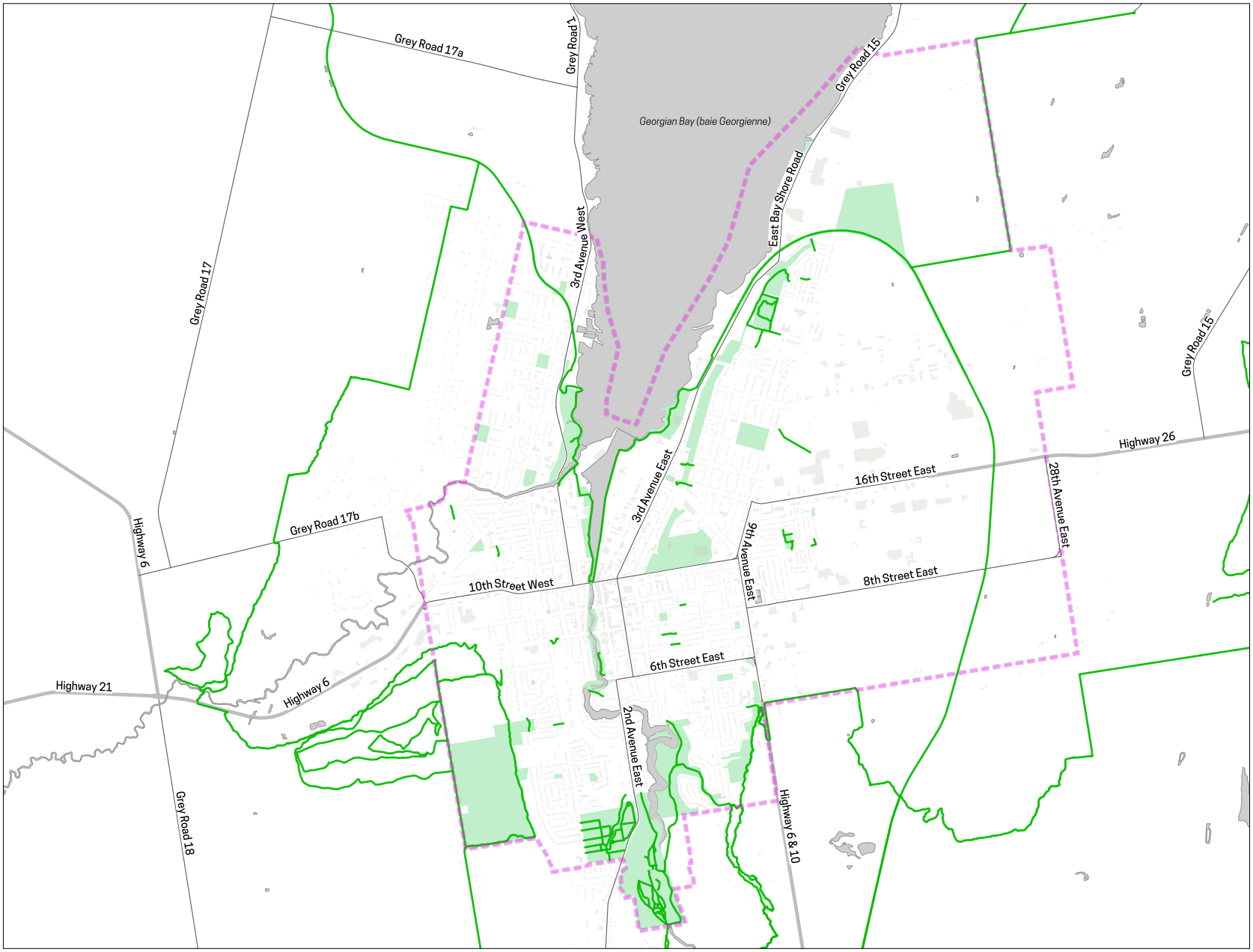
2.9 Trails

Owen Sound is blessed with an extensive, contiguous trail and park system. The network connects the waterfront with the CP Rail Trail, as well as Harrison Park in the south, and Jones Falls in the Pottawatomi Conservation Area east of the city.

Many of the same considerations for roadway-based wayfinding applies to trails, with the network being defined by main routes, entry-points, and decision-points. Trail signage is typically more complicated with a much wider range of expectations from users and modal choices: asphalt-paved trails for transportation and urban recreation differ hugely from wilderness trails.

Owen Sound's Trails Master Plan (2012) makes several recommendations with respect to signage, suggesting improvements to accessibility of signs, and recommending that more consistent signage would also improve user safety.



Map

Parks and trails

Parks

Trails

boundary

0 0.8 1.6 km

CRS

NAD83(CSRS) / UTM zone 17N

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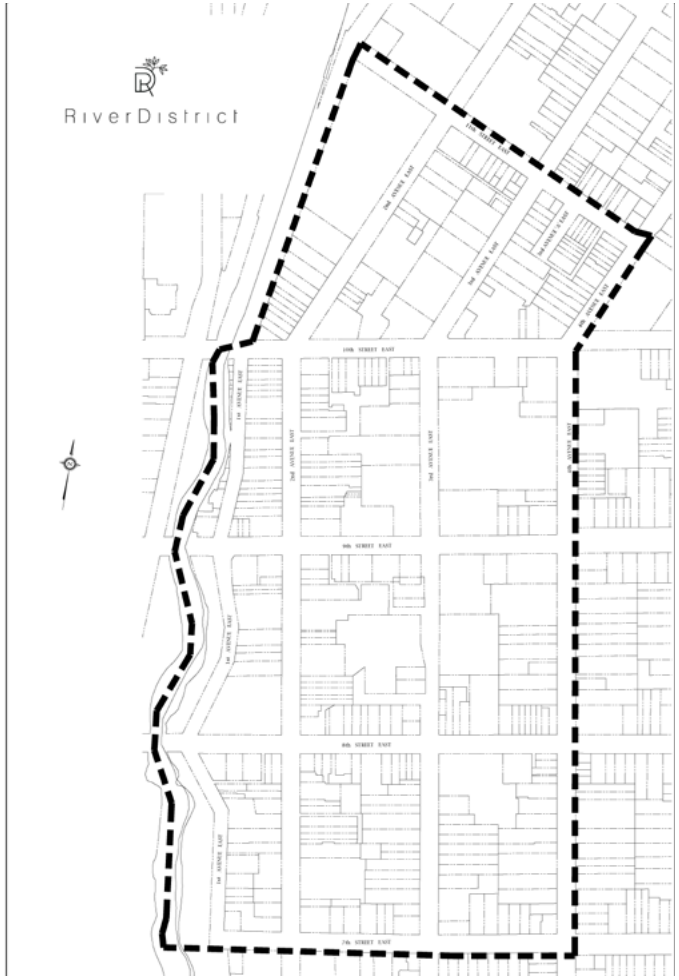
2.10 Destinations

The wayfinding system in this project is based on destinations—directing people along a set of main routes to specific places. While RTO7 does allow for "pay-to-play" signage directing people to private businesses and sites, we recommend Owen Sound focus solely on public or civic assets. The administration required for a pay-to-play system is often more complex and costly than can be raised through fees from participating businesses.

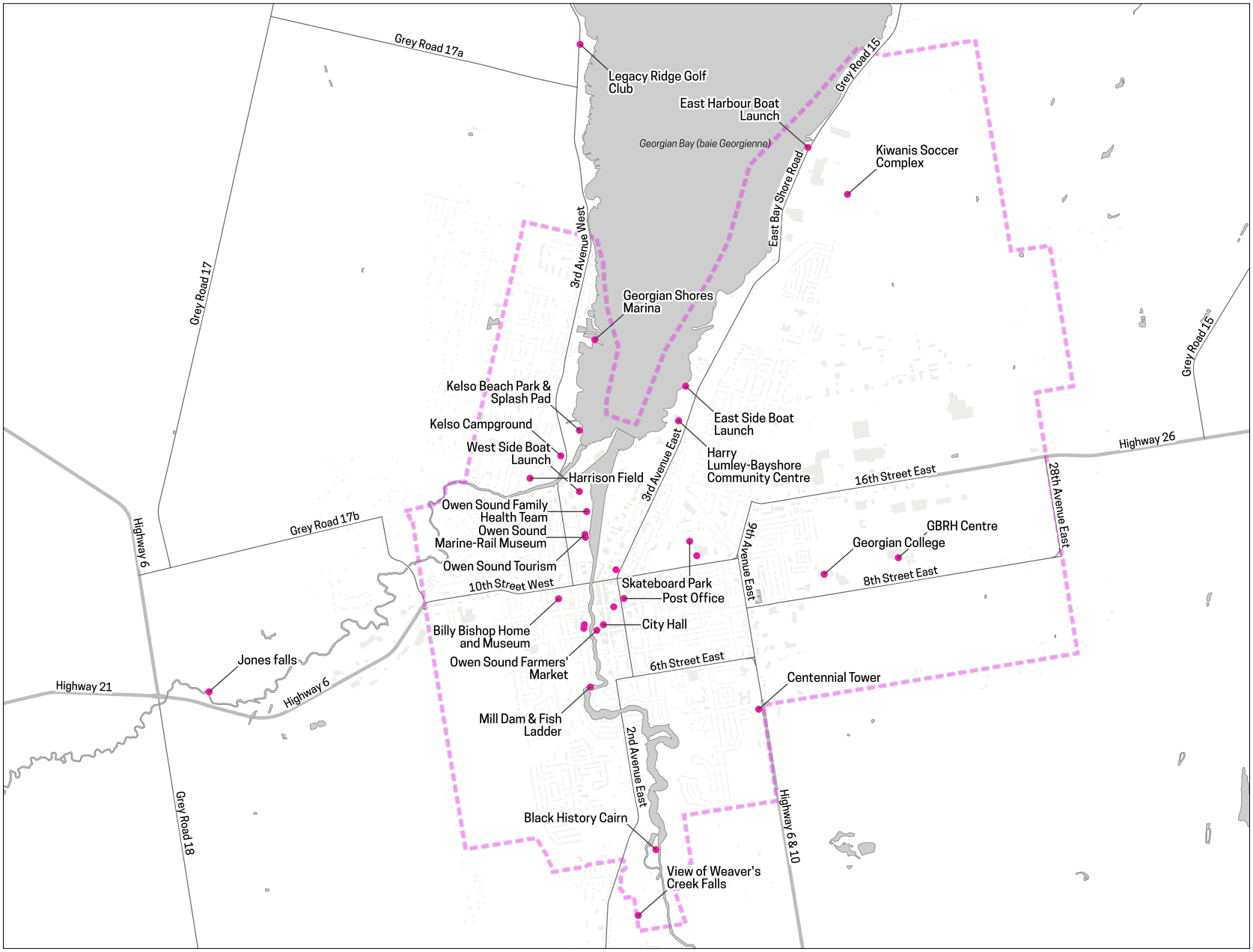
Working with the city, we selected destinations which fit in the following categories of public interest:

- transportation
- parks
- trailheads
- business parks and retail clusters
- heritage and cultural sites
- administrative buildings
- boat launches
- other municipal recreation amenities
- hospital, health facilities and clinics

There is no reason to include every possible asset in the above categories. Destinations in the above categories should be of interest to visitors from outside the municipality or from neighbouring communities. For example, small parks of neighbourhood interest should not be included.



River District boundaries



Map

Destinations

- points of interest
- boundary

0 0.8 1.6 km

CRS

NAD83(CSRS) / UTM zone 17N

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Revision

2022-08-06T17:20:00.841

2.11 Interpretive signage

Planning

The City of Owen Sound has an interpretive plan which has guided some interpretive sign installations to date. Currently there is not a consistent look and feel for installed signs of this type, though we are told that the strategy is being implemented. We recommend the city respect its interpretive strategy and avoid ad hoc installations: each request should be considered against the strategy to ensure it fits the city's intent for interpretation. We've provided a few recommendations below, to supplement the strategy based on our signage audit.

Spatial and digital considerations

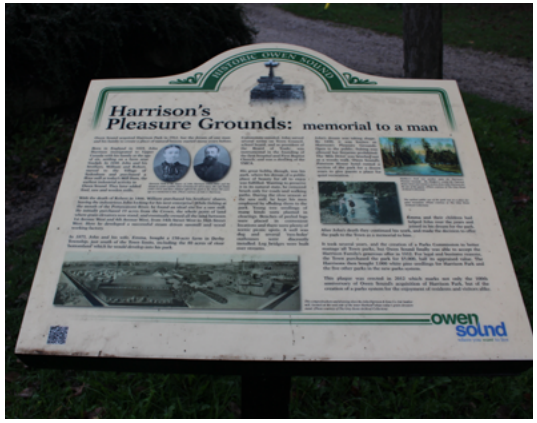
There are many opportunities to incorporate interpretive content in various areas in Owen Sound. Areas of interest may include cultural, historical or natural sites, such as the nature trails, where visitors can learn about the fauna and flora found in the area. Less traditional interpretive elements may be used as muster points and landmarks or opportunities for educational tours for locals and visitors alike. Task-driven activities can lead curious individuals and families around Owen Sound in a curated way and hands-on interpretive elements will inspire interactivity and active participation or learning. Brief yet captivating stories can drive the viewer to a digital platform where they can find out more about the interpreted information. The platform can also be populated with an array of supplemental information such as maps, social and cultural services, and events, and historical references, to name a few.

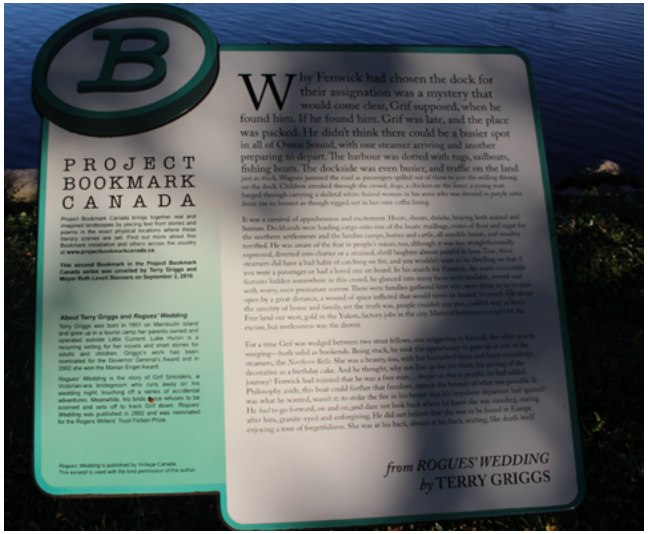
Panel design

Existing interpretive signs (such as the Owen Sound Local Heroes) could be replaced with RTO7-compliant signs (e.g. Pi-1). Following the best practices established in the RTO7 guidelines for type-size, colour contrast, etc., will create consistent signage throughout the town, be highly legible, and adhere to AODA standards.

Voices

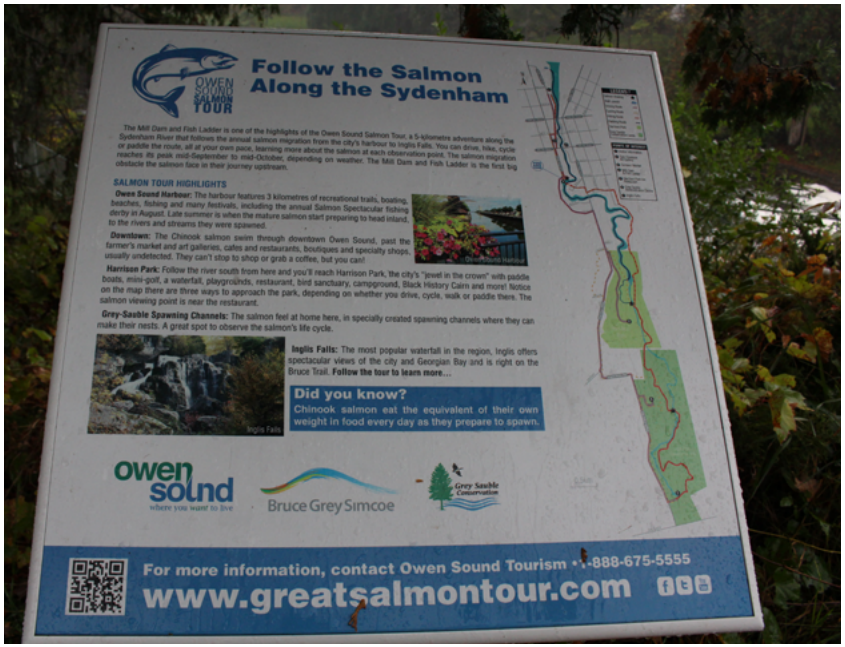
When developing a broad interpretive planning exercise, we strongly advise following the "never about us without us" motto—for example, consider engagement with local First Nation elders, leaders of communities of interest, and local subject matter experts.





Interpretive

Despite a dated and worn appearance, the interpretive panels for "Owen Sound Local Heroes" are nicely done with a consistent look and a well-executed interpretive programme. Other panels identified unique natural features well.



2.12 Policy

Official Plan

Among its recommendations, Owen Sound's Official Plan supports wayfinding by recommending wayfinding signage as an urban design strategy, as well as recommending gateway signage at main entrances:

- *The City may identify certain points of entry into the City and certain key intersections as Gateways and Nodes. These are points that may be used to create a sense of welcome and arrival, assist in orientation and create a memorable image of the City. (7.8.3.5)*
- *The City will employ clear directional signage to inform visitors of the route to reach the main centres of the Downtown, harbour, east side commercial and west side commercial areas and to reach highway linking points. Signage should also identify the routes to other landmark destinations such as major parks, the library and hospital. (7.8.3.7)*

River District Action Plan

This plan provides several observations and recommendations makes several recommendations with respect to wayfinding, and signage generally:

- *Wayfinding and perpendicular signage could greatly aid in discovering more elements linked to the downtown core including specific businesses or destinations. (p6)*
- *Recommendation: Make it easier to for visitors to find their way and stop in the River District. Installing wayfinding to direct traffic to the River District, and to support navigation while in the area will help to attract the attention of drive through traffic and ensure they find their way once they arrive. Making parking easy and effortless will encourage them to stop, spend time and money. (p20)*
- *Action 10: Undertake a River District wayfinding plan. Undertake a wayfinding plan, outlining River District signage needs. The plan should include recommendations regarding: River District wayfinding needs; Branded gateway signage welcoming visitors to the River District; Arterial route signage directing traffic to the River District; Signage to River District parking areas (directed from the main retail area); and Signage to key attractions (i.e. River District Retail Area, River Precinct, rest area, Farmers' Market, public washrooms etc.) (p21)*

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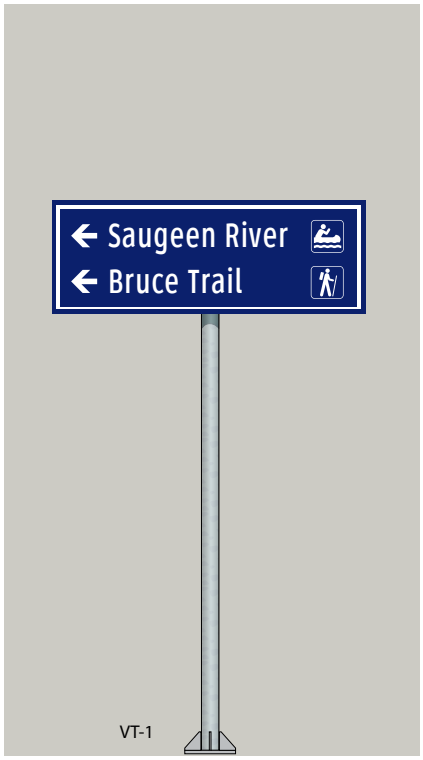
03 Sign types

3.1 RT07 signage

We're working with the existing RT07 wayfinding sign designs in this system, endorsed by the City of Owen Sound. The full RT07 system presents some 31 sign types available for use by participating municipalities, with signs appropriate for urban & rural areas, highways, public spaces, trails, and interpretive sites. With its largely urban and suburban character, many of RT07's more rural and highway-oriented sign types are not appropriate for Owen Sound.

Not all of the RT07 sign types make sense for Owen Sound, and therefore we have selected a subset of the available types for this plan.

Community ID (Ah-2)
Vehicular-level sign designed to provide welcoming notice that one has arrived in a particular community.



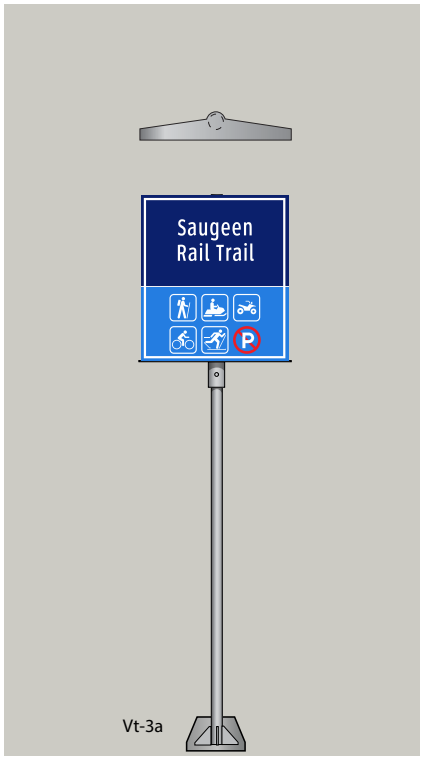
Trailblazer directional (Vt-1)
Vehicular-level directional sign unit designed to provide directional information to special interest destinations.

Urban vehicular route marker (Vt-2a)
Vehicular sign to provide directional and assurance pertaining to driving tour routes on highways and roads.

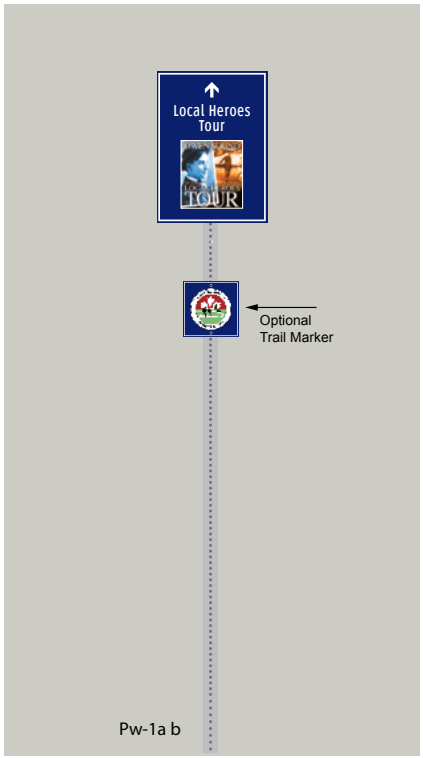
Urban directional (Vu-1)
Vehicular-level sign designed to provide directional information to amenities within Region 7 communities.

Core Directional (Vu-2)
Combination vehicular/pedestrian-level directional sign unit designed to provide directional information to amenities within Region 7 communities.

Parking lot ID (Vu-3)
Vehicular-level sign used to identify downtown public parking lots.



Urban vehicular-pedestrian destination ID & regulatory (Vt-3a)
Vehicular sign for use on side roads leading to a trail head or trail parking area.



Pedestrian Walking Tour Guide (Pw-1)
Pedestrian-level sign designed to provide directional and assurance for a specified special interest route within walkable community areas.

Rural pedestrian RTO 7 map directory (Pd-1b)

Pedestrian-level information / orientation sign for use at trailheads for the display of overall RTO7 regional information. Opposite side should be formatted to provide specific community or amenity, e.g. trail, information.

Pedestrian Community Map Directory (Pd-2)

Pedestrian-level information and orientation sign for display of immediate community information. Opposite side should provide general RTO7 orientation information relative to the specific community.

Trail Marker alternative layout (Pw-2)

Trail sign designed to provide trailhead and directional information, including AODA requirements for recreational trails.

3.2 Community header

Several RT07 sign types allow for custom-branded headers. We have provided two recommended design for these headers one to marry with the Owen Sound brand and the other The River District. The header at right fits the guidelines for height and ensures a balance between the branding and the functionally important directional messaging.

Of the RT07 sign types selected for this strategy, only the Urban directional (Vu-1) and Parking ID (Vu-3) carry this custom header.

River District-branded header

Owen Sound-branded header

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04 Recommendations

4.1 Recommendations

We suggest the following recommendations for wayfinding in Owen Sound:

1. Sign placement

Currently, most signs are in the city centre directing people outwards to the edges and beyond. With the largest concentration of important destinations in the city centre, this plan focuses wayfinding efforts on the opposite approach: ensuring that signs help visitors find their way from the edges to the city's centre and River District.

2. Gateway signage

Main entry points to Owen Sound should be well-served by a consistent set of gateway signs, to let visitors know they've arrived.

3. Park and trails sign designs

With such a large number of parks and an extensive park and trail system, we suggest developing a design for park and trail signs. The current signs are inconsistent and do not reflect the city's branding. Such a design effort should include some of the following sign types:

- park ID
- trailhead signs
- trail directionals

Parks and trail sign designs generally have complex messaging requirements and often require the consideration of regulatory information, trail maps, and interpretive information (e.g. why is this park here? what is unique about it?) It's important for this strategy to be consulted when doing any other park planning.

4. Interpretive signage

As outlined on page 33, we recommend developing an interpretive plan for Owen Sound, covering the main aspects of the place's culture, nature and history. The plan should be used ensure that any new signs are in keeping with the municipality's design standard, as well as fit within the themes and stories selected.

As for interpretive designs, we recommend using the RTO7 interpretive sign types, or have designed a customized sign type for the city in keeping with the city's brand.

5. Civic destinations only

We're often asked to direct our clients on whether a municipal wayfinding system should include commercial destinations or if only public, civic destinations should be included. There is always an issue of fairness—if commercial destinations are included, how to decide on which destinations are eligible, and to ensure the system of signs is balanced and fair. Some municipalities have implemented "pay-to-play" systems where businesses may pay an annual fee to appear on wayfinding directional signage.

Owen Sound is urban, and with many civic destinations clustered closely in and around the River District, this kind of pay-to-play system would be untenable. Including just civic destinations already fills the available real estate on most signs. We recommend instead directing people to the River District as a cluster, where there is lots of retail—and where people can drive or walk and easily discover all the options that are available.

6. Destination criteria

Within this program we have selected a set of municipally-owned or civic destinations to direct visitors and residents to. Criteria include:

- Specific sites
- Civic/publicly owned assets
- Retail/cultural clusters
- Accessible by road or trail
- Open year round
- Consistent opening hours/season
- Within the boundary of the township

Any new destinations added to the program should follow the criteria.

7. Operations and maintenance

While signs are durable and generally take care of themselves, they have annual maintenance requirements, and they have a natural lifespan. The township should not invest in new signage without also assigning responsibility for its upkeep to a specific staff member.

Consider the following ongoing responsibilities:

- Sign panels should be checked annually for damage and wear, and cleaned, repaired or replaced as needed.
- Trees and shrubs around signs must be cut so that they doesn't obscure visibility for drivers or pedestrians.
- Wayfinding signs may need adjustment over time—destinations come and go, routes change, destinations are renamed. Ensure those changes are always reflected in your signage.
- Signs are typically warrantied for 5–10 years. Maintain a schedule to check signs' lifespan.
- Consider a reserve fund to deal with the inevitable needs of sign maintenance.

If visitors see useful, well kept wayfinding signage, they will feel welcomed. Broken, obscured, or unusable wayfinding signage will reflect poorly on your administration.

05 Sign program

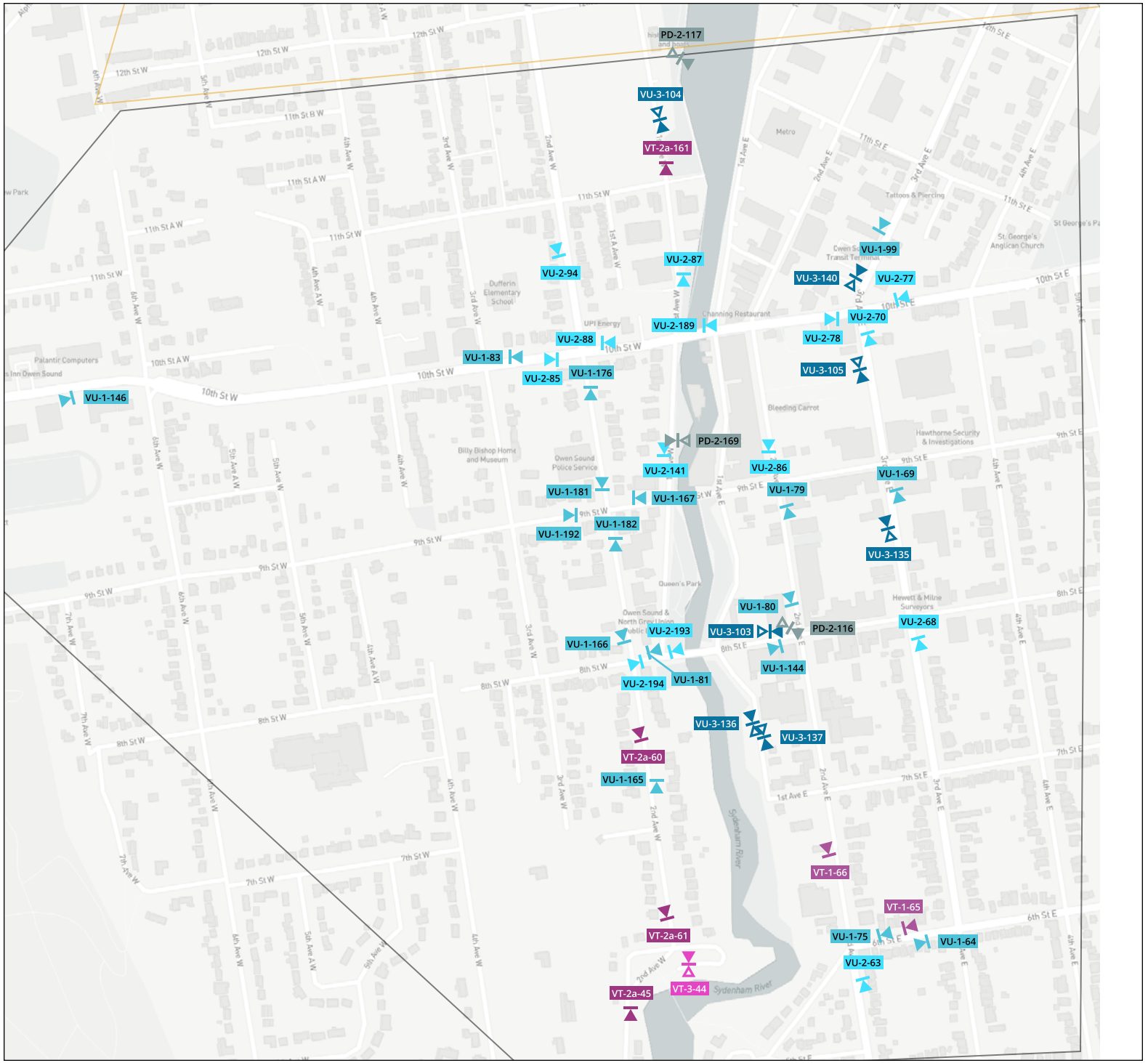
5.1 Overview

The following plans show our recommended program of wayfinding signs. The sign locations and messages reflect the decisions made in the discovery phase of this project—they:

- are located along our selection of main routes
- address all important decision points on those routes
- identify certain destinations to let people know they've arrived (e.g. parks, trails, parking lots)
- alert visitors that they have entered Owen Sound

The locations provided in this plan are notional for planning and budgeting purposes, and should not be examined at a site plan level. Put another way, we have not examined each sign location's site to determine if they are blocked by existing trees or buildings, or whether a specific road's curve necessitates installing a sign further back from an intersection. When implementing a sign program of this type, Owen Sound should work with a reputable sign fabricator/installer to select suitable site-specific locations to ensure *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada* (MUTCD-C) guidelines are followed, that other necessary road signs are respected, and that the land on which signs are installed is appropriate.

Sign messages will be supplied as a spreadsheet, and each sign label on the following pages "keys" to a row in the spreadsheet outlining what messages it should include.

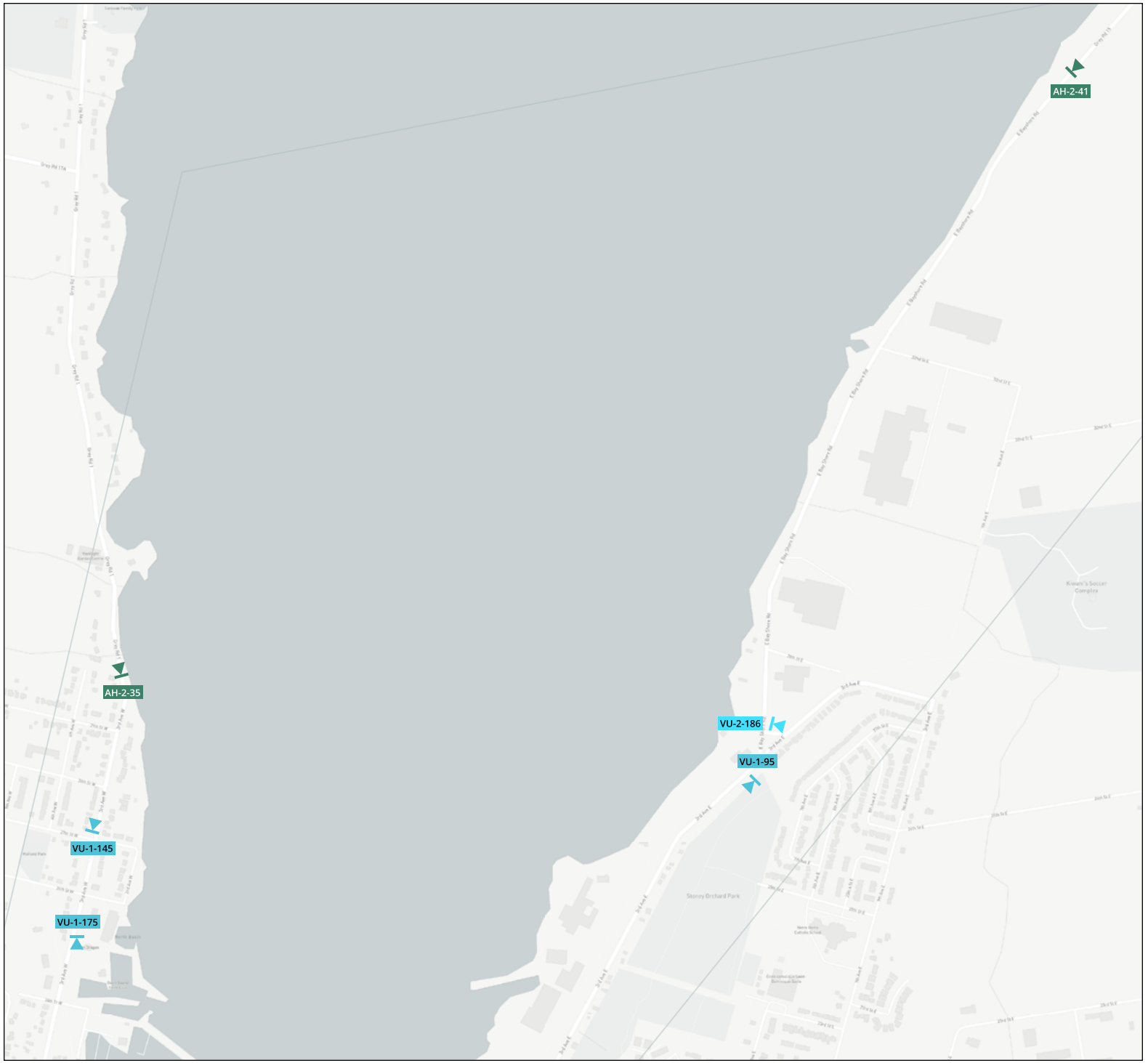

PD-2-117
VU-3-104
VT-2a-161
VU-2-94
VU-2-87
VU-1-99
VU-3-140
VU-2-77
VU-2-70
VU-2-78
VU-2-189
VU-2-88
VU-1-83
VU-2-85
VU-1-176
VU-3-105
VU-1-146
PD-2-169
VU-2-141
VU-2-86
VU-1-69
VU-1-181
VU-1-167
VU-1-79
VU-1-192
VU-1-182
VU-3-135
VU-1-80
VU-2-68
VU-3-103
PD-2-116
VU-1-166
VU-2-193
VU-1-144
VU-2-194
VU-1-81
VU-3-136
VU-3-137
VT-2a-60
VU-1-165
VT-1-66
VT-1-65
VT-2a-61
VU-1-75
VU-1-64
VU-2-63
VT-3-44
VT-2a-45
Downtown
River District

South


VT-1-67
VT-2a-147
VU-3-132
VU-3-131
VU-1-62
VT-1-143
VT-1-151
AH-2-38
PW-2-160
VU-1-148
PD-1b-158
VU-3-138
PW-2-154
AH-2-37
PD-1b-109
VT-3-156
VU-3-133
PW-2-110
PD-1b-108
PW-2-111
VU-3-157
PW-1b-112
PD-1b-113
PW-2-159
PD-1b-163
Greenwood Cemetery
Harrison Park
Sydenham River
Garafraxa Park
Hwy 6/10
Grey Bruce Auto Wreckers
Harrison Park Family Campground
St. Mary's Cemetery
Weaver Creek Falls

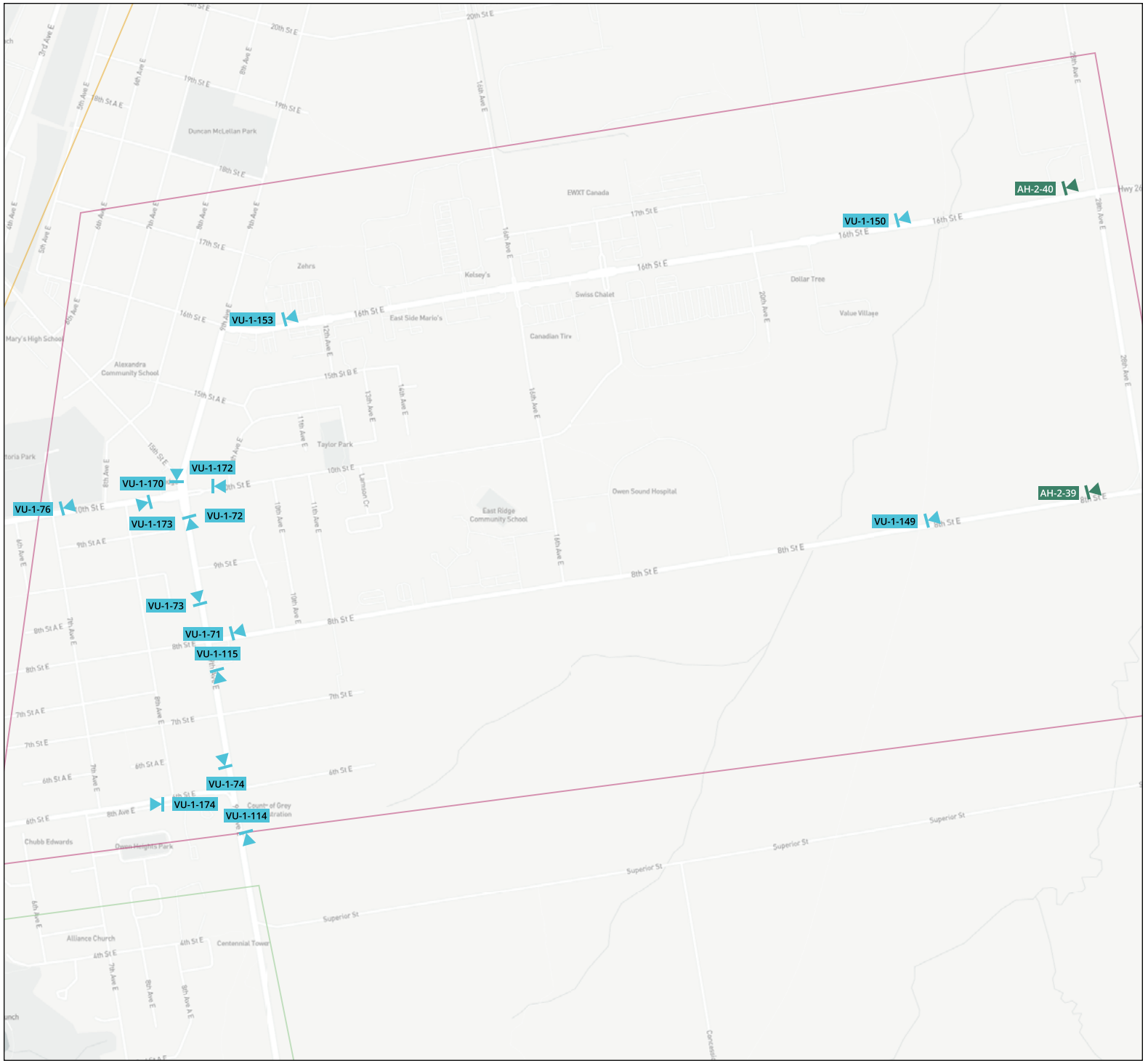

VU-2-93
VU-2-92
PW-1b-183
PW-1b-102
PW-2-100
VT-3-101
VU-1-96
VU-1-98
VU-1-97
VU-1-177
VT-2a-56
VT-1-187
VU-1-178
VU-1-179
VU-2-180
VU-1-171
PW-2-184
VU-2-91

North



Upper North

East


AH-2-40
VU-1-150
VU-1-153
AH-2-39
VU-1-149
VU-1-172
VU-1-170
VU-1-76
VU-1-173
VU-1-72
VU-1-73
VU-1-71
VU-1-115
VU-1-74
VU-1-174
VU-1-114
16th St E
8th St E
Superior St
Duncan McLellan Park
Zehrs
Kelsey's
Swiss Chalet
Dollar Tree
Value Village
East Side Mario's
Canadian Tire
Alexandra Community School
Taylor Park
East Ridge Community School
Owen Sound Hospital
Chubb Edwards
Alliance Church
Centennial Tower

West

06 Budget and implementation

6.1 Program estimate

The estimates in the following table have been prepared based on historical sign fabrication amounts for similar signs in the RTO7 wayfinding system. Estimates are provided for budgetary purposes only, and are not a replacement for pricing received in a competitive tender. The following estimates include fabrication of the signs, delivery, and installation. We assume that fabrication and installation will be done by a private fabricator, under contract to Owen Sound.

The below grade component of the estimates is based on an average of normal installation types (soil, location, etc.)—these may vary considerably depending on the site conditions of the final sign installations.

The 50% "Covid multiplier" below reflects the high degree of uncertainty over supply and labour right now, as historical estimate values are pre-Covid. .

The table below outlines the quantity of each sign type that we have included in the program, as well as a program total.

code	variant	type (vehicular)	design state	quantity	historical estimate	subtotal	
Ah	2	community ID	RT07 template	7	$2,937	$20,559	
Vt	1	trailblazer directional	RT07 template	6	$1,020	$6,120	
Vt	2a	vehicular route marker	RT07 template	8	$1,194	$9,552	
Vt	3a	urban vehicular-pedestrian destination ID & regulatory	RT07 template	3	$3,102	$9,306	
Vu	1	urban directional	RT07 template	43	$3,438	$147,834	
Vu	2	urban core directional	RT07 template	19	$3,357	$63,783	
Vu	3	parking lot ID	RT07 template	12	$3,897	$46,764	
		program total		**98**		**$303,918**	
		Covid multiplier				**50.00%**	
		Covid premium				**$151,959**	**+**
		2022 budget amount				**$455,877**	**=**

code	variant	type (pedestrian)	design state	quantity	historical estimate	subtotal	
PW	1b	rural walking tour guide	RT07 template	3	$5,000	$15,000	
PW	2	trailhead	RT07 template	7	$3,000	$21,000	
PD	1b	rural pedestrian RT07 map directory	RT07 template	5	$1,260	$6,300	
PD	2	urban pedestrian community map directory	RT07 template	3	$3,573	$10,719	
		program total		**18**		**$53,019**	
		Covid multiplier				**50.00%**	
		Covid premium				**$26,510**	**+**
		2022 budget amount				**$79,529**	**=**

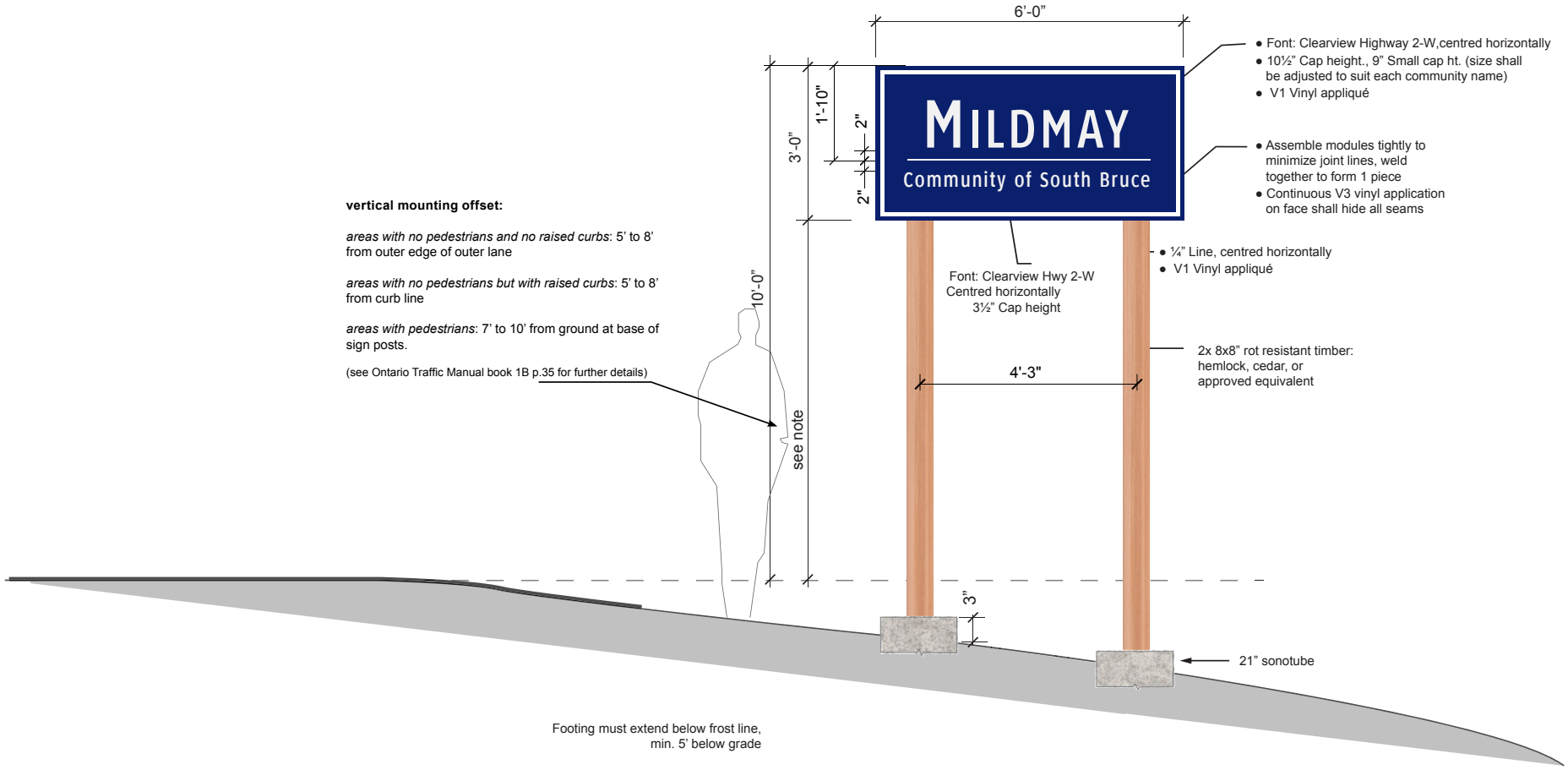
type (vehicular and pedestrian)	design state	quantity	subtotal	
vehicular signage	RT07 template	98	**$455,877**	
pedestrian signage	RT07 template	18	**$79,529**	**+**
program total		**116**		
2022 budget amount			**$535,406**	**=**

07 Design drawings

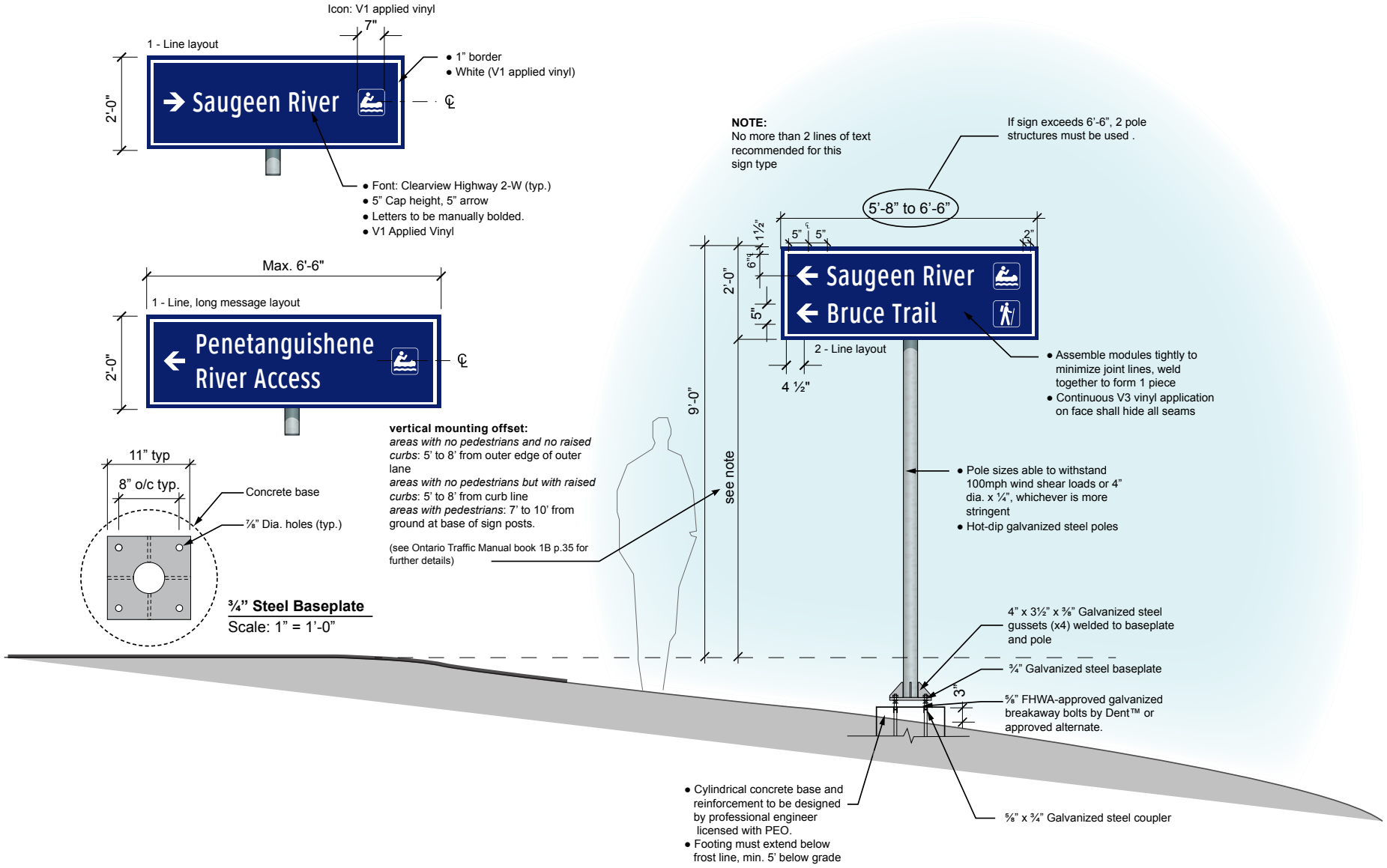
7.1 Drawings

The RT07 wayfinding system is detailed in a large guidelines document *RT07 Wayfinding Signage Standards and Specifications*, with specs, drawings and other elements to guide sign fabricators. To aid in evaluating the signs and for future sign implementation, we have included the relevant existing drawings here for sign types we have recommended for your convenience. The RT07 wayfinding system is periodically updated, and if there are any discrepancies, we recommend referring to the latest document as provided by the RT07.

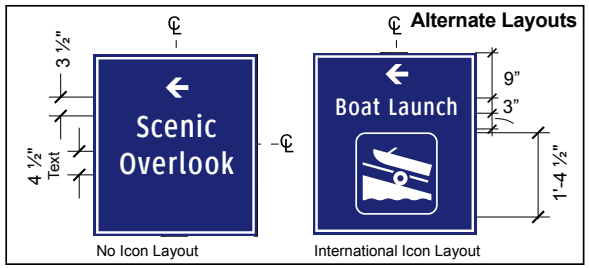
Please note that the drawings predate this report and have not been updated or modified during this project.

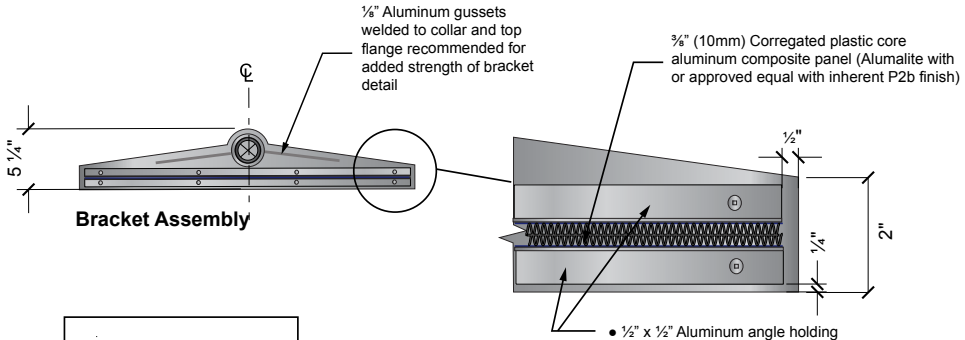


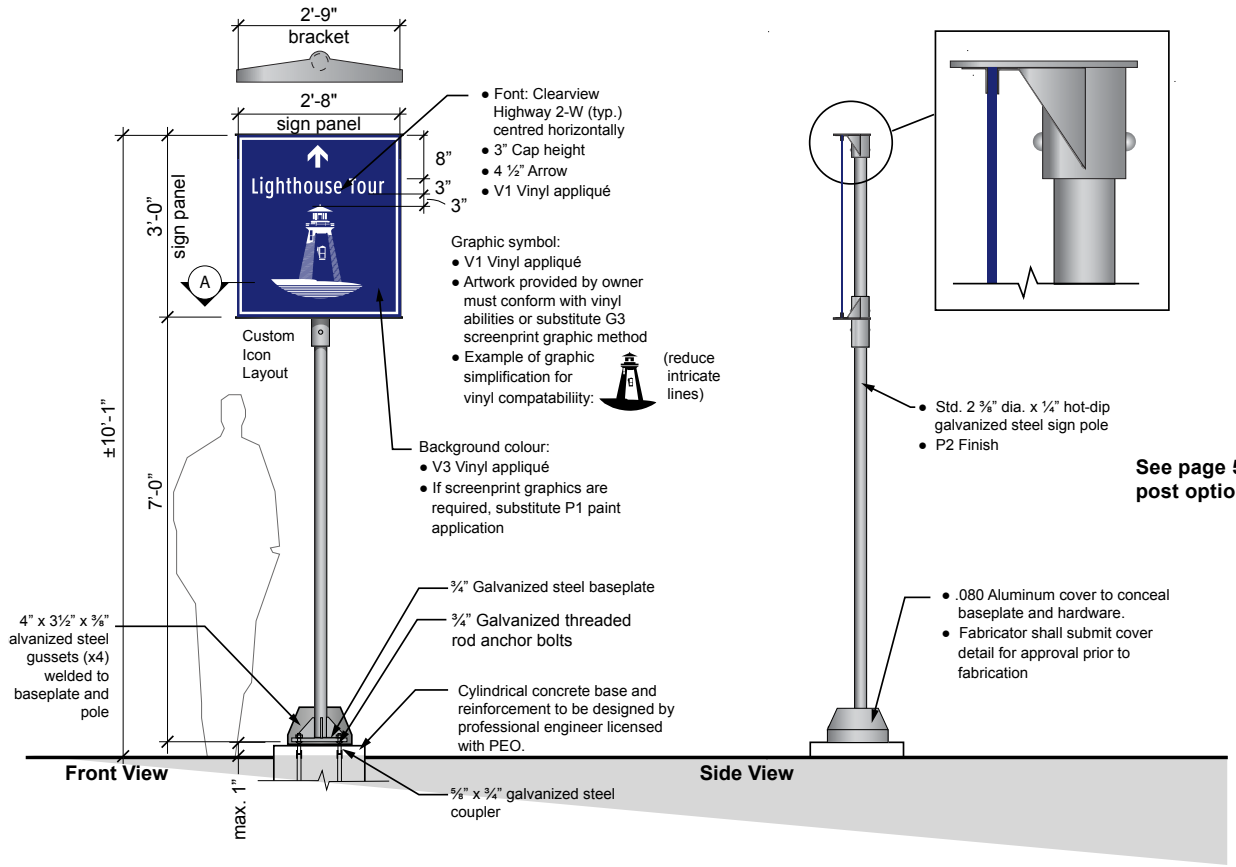
1 Starr Lane, Dartmouth, NS B2Y 4V7 t 902.464.4447 f 902.465.3131 | 47 Fraser Avenue, Toronto, ON M6K 1Y7 t 289.807.0131 f 416.588.7401



1 Starr Lane, Dartmouth, NS B2Y 4V7 t 902.464.4447 f 902.465.3131 | 47 Fraser Avenue, Toronto, ON M6K 1Y7 t 289.807.0131 f 416.588.7401

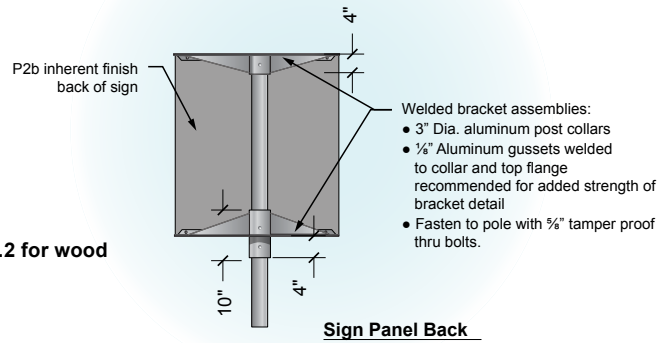




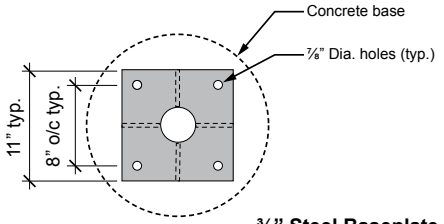


See page 5-2.2 for wood post option.

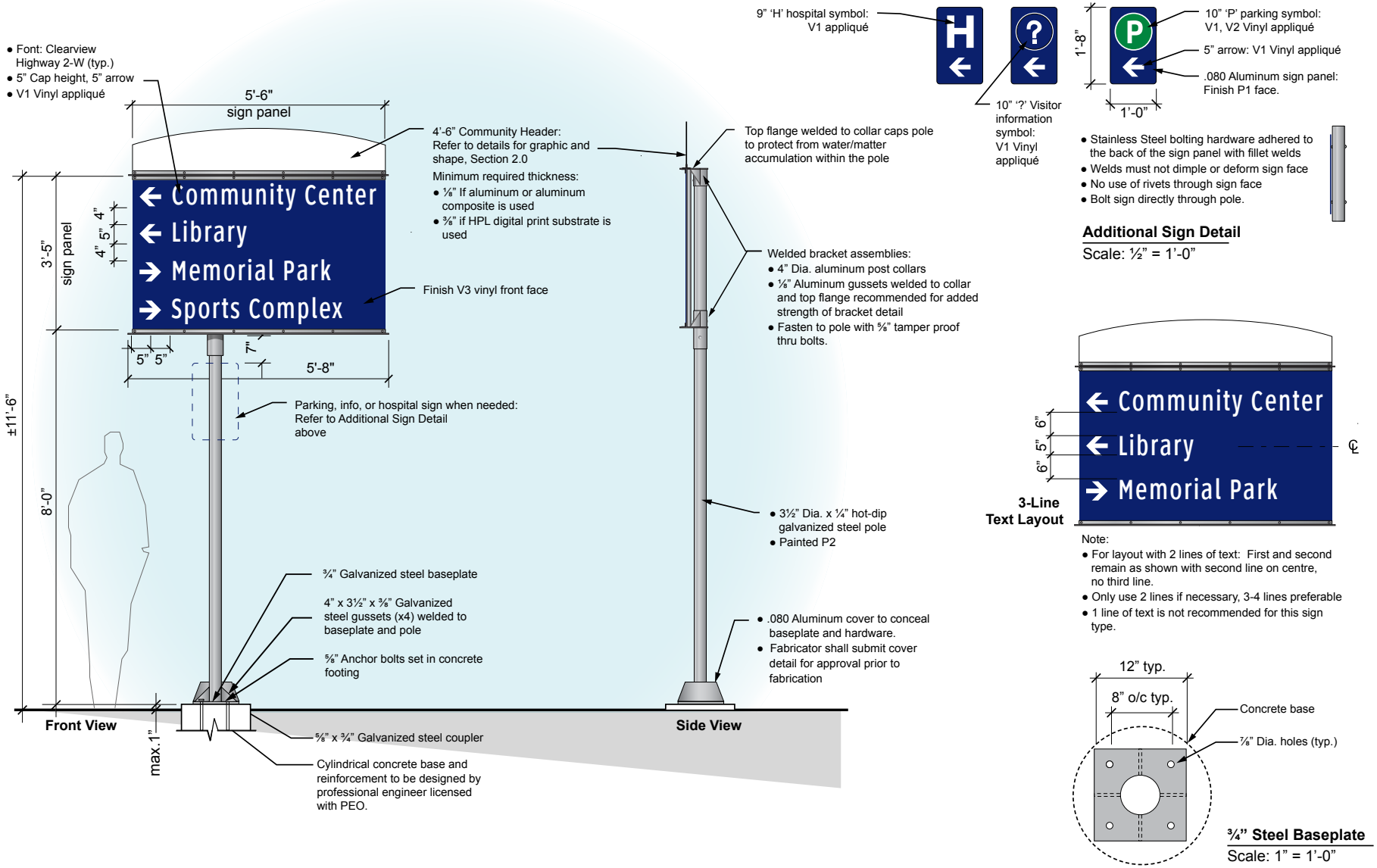
Section A - Sign Panel Detail
Scale: 6" = 1'-0"



Sign Panel Back
Scale: ½" = 1'-0"



¾" Steel Baseplate
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"



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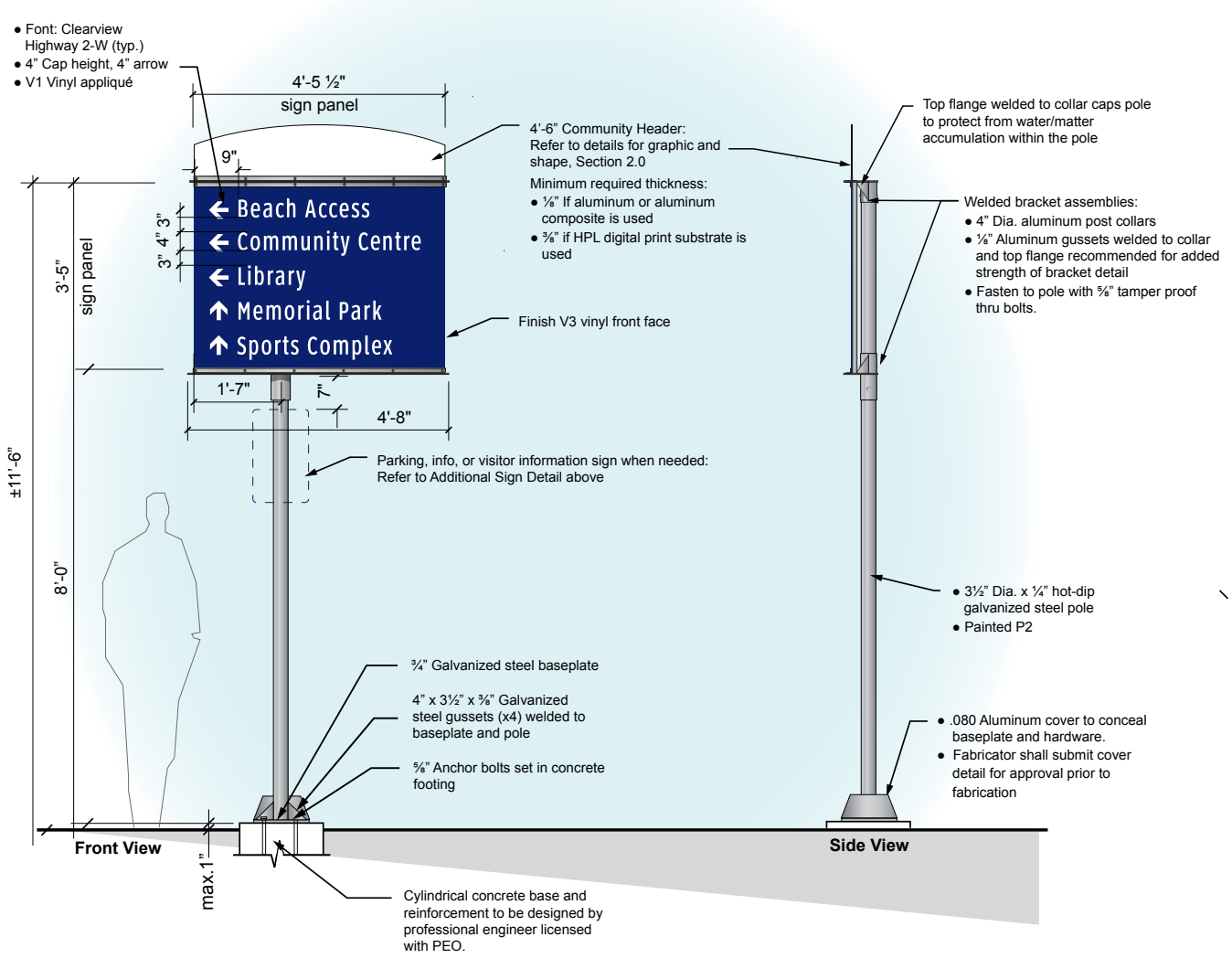
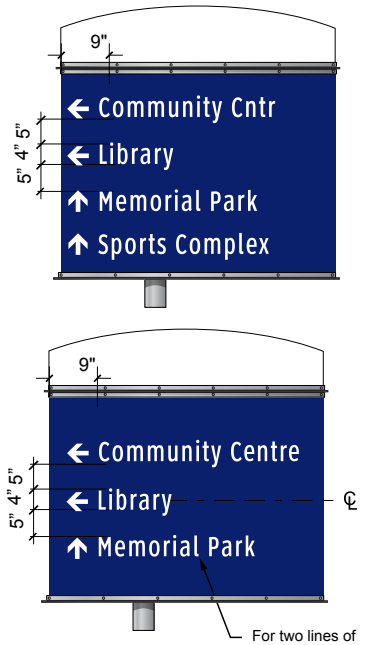
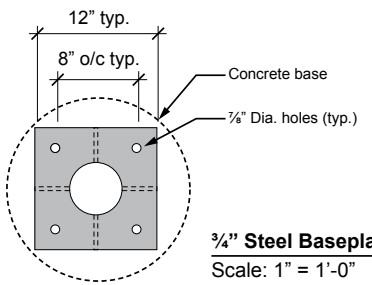




Note:
- Only use 2 lines if necessary, 3-4 lines preferable
- 1 line of text is not recommended for this sign type.

Alternate Text Layouts
Scale: ½" = 1'-0"



¾" Steel Baseplate
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"

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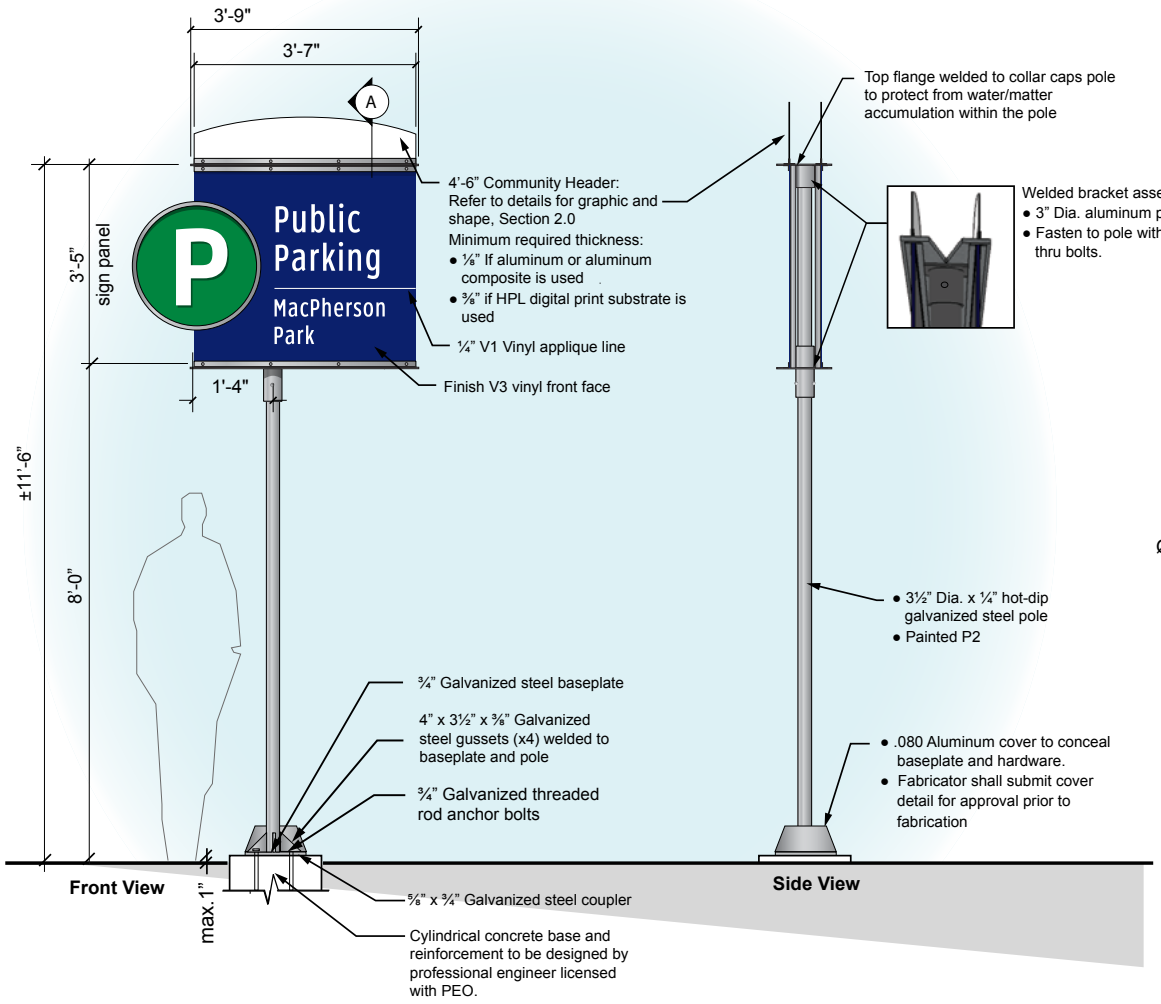
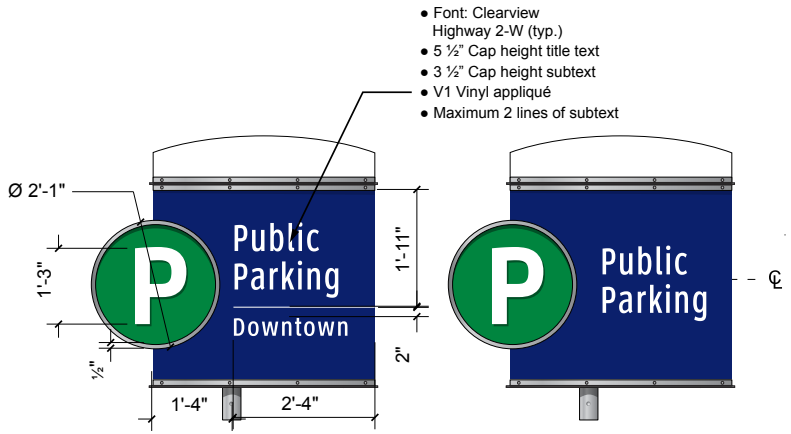
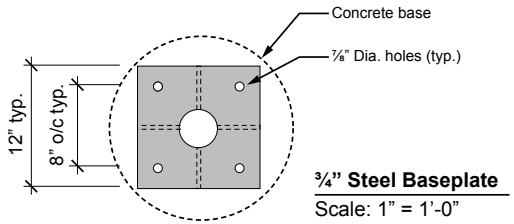
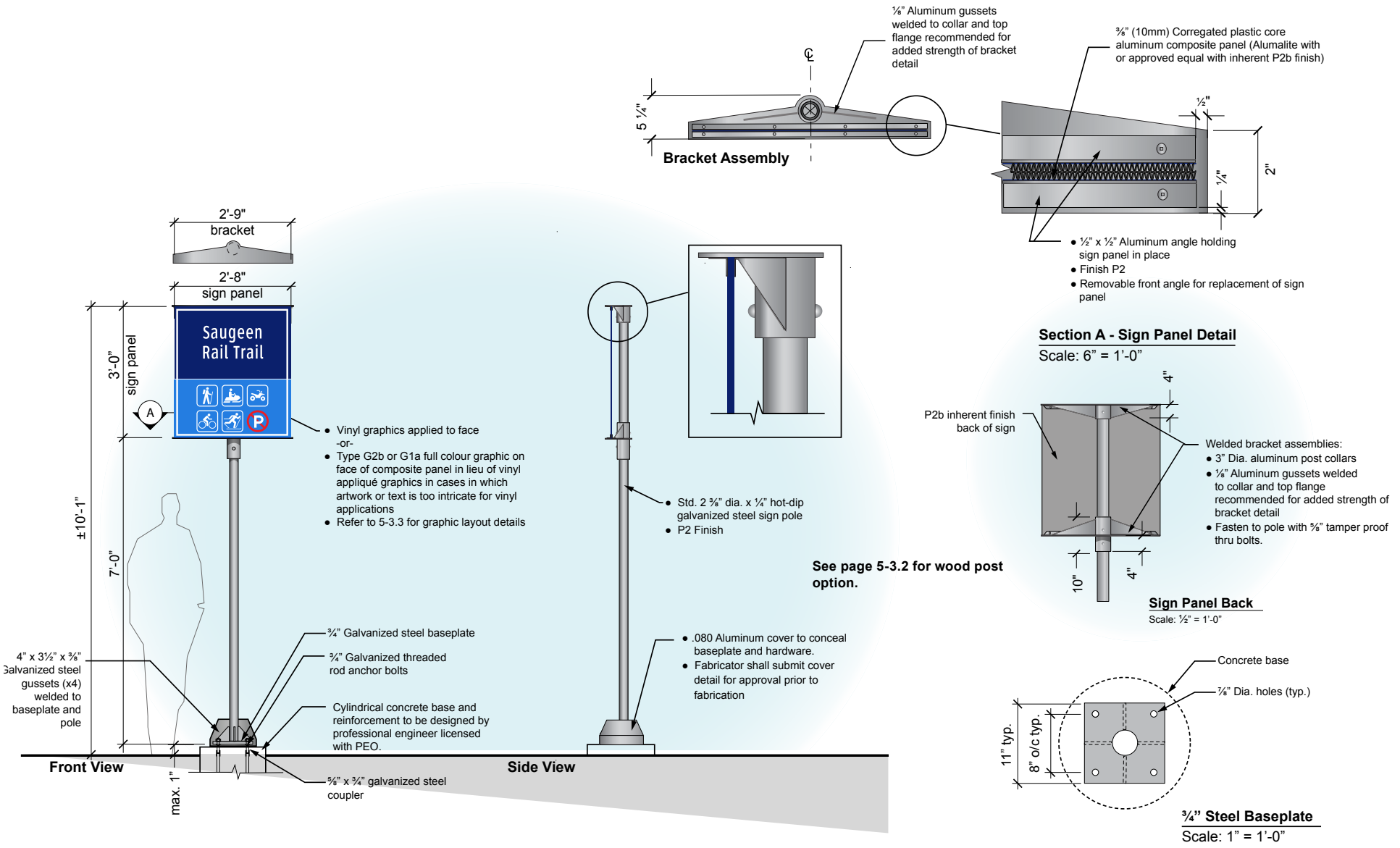


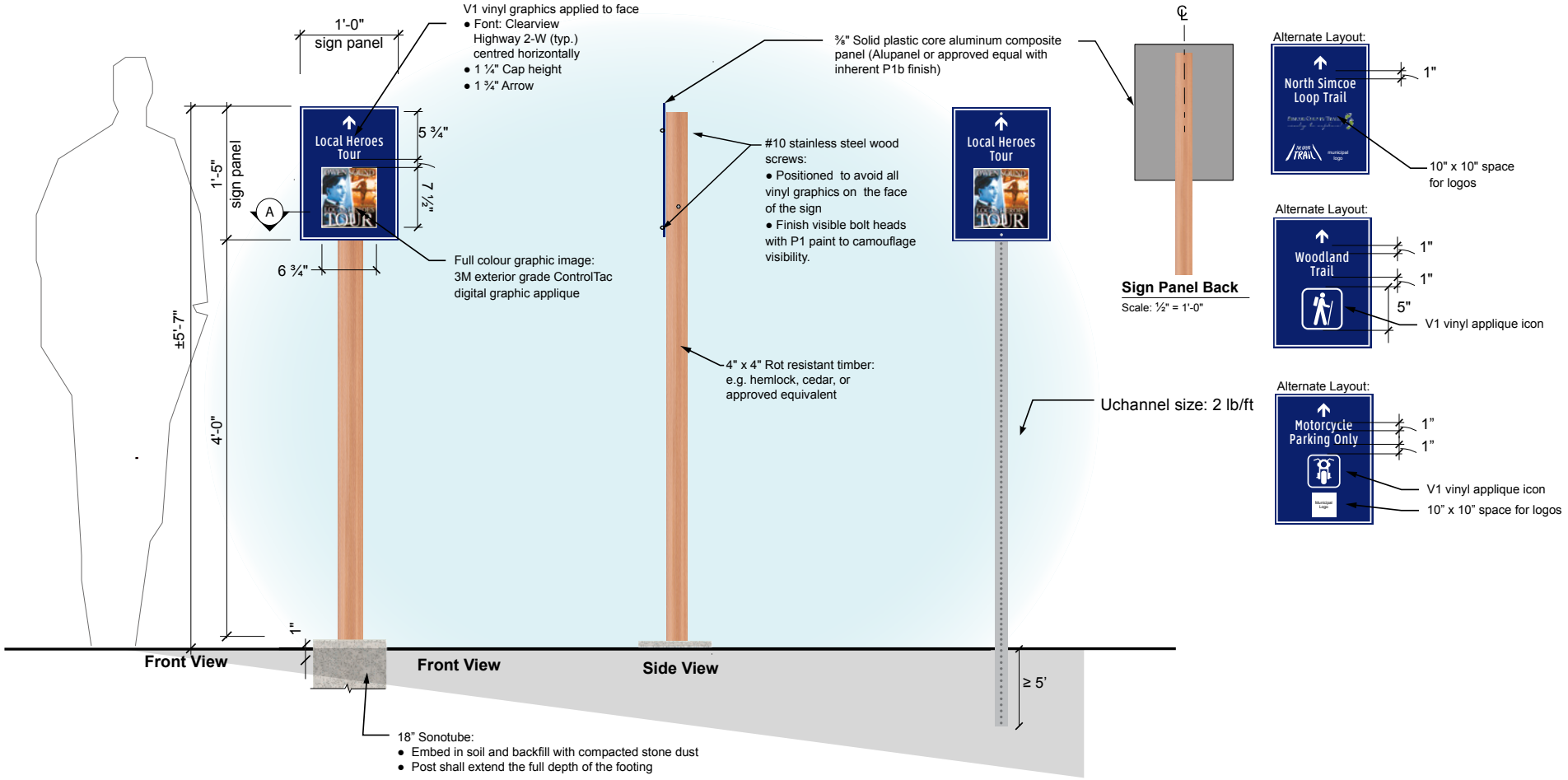


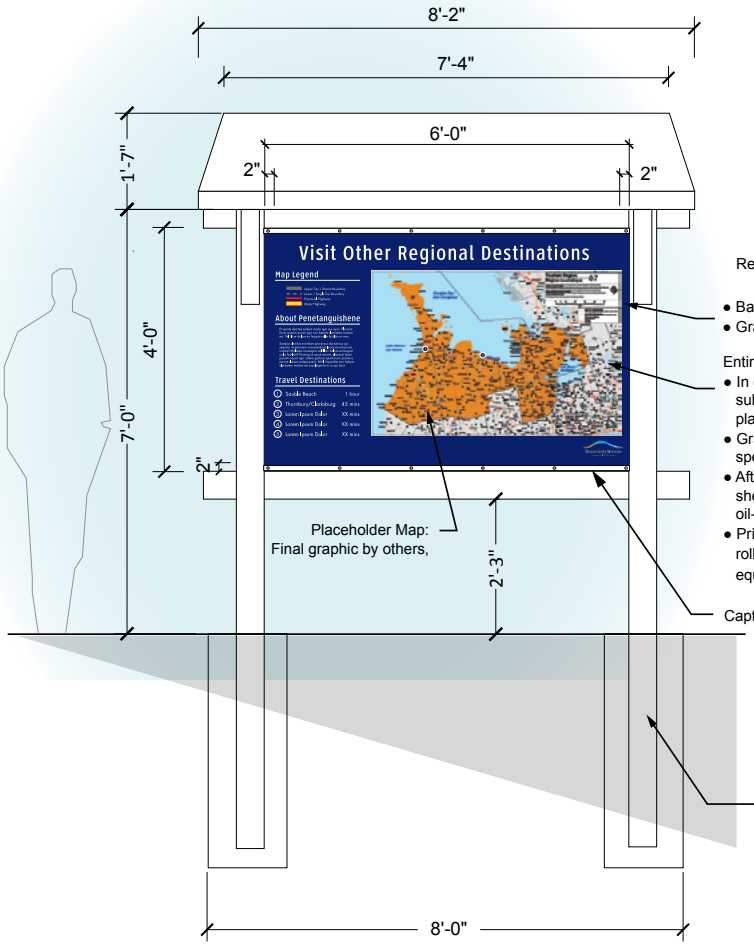
Text Layout Variations



¾" Steel Baseplate
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"


⅛" Aluminum gussets welded to collar and top flange recommended for added strength of bracket detail
⅜" (10mm) Corregated plastic core aluminum composite panel (Alumalite with or approved equal with inherent P2b finish)
5 ¼"
Bracket Assembly
½"
¼"
2"
• ½" x ½" Aluminum angle holding sign panel in place
• Finish P2
• Removable front angle for replacement of sign panel
Section A - Sign Panel Detail
Scale: 6" = 1'-0"
2'-9" bracket
2'-8" sign panel
Saugeen Rail Trail
3'-0" sign panel
A
±10'-1"
7'-0"
• Vinyl graphics applied to face
-or-
• Type G2b or G1a full colour graphic on face of composite panel in lieu of vinyl appliqué graphics in cases in which artwork or text is too intricate for vinyl applications
• Refer to 5-3.3 for graphic layout details
• Std. 2 ⅜" dia. x ¼" hot-dip galvanized steel sign pole
• P2 Finish
See page 5-3.2 for wood post option.
4" x 3½" x ⅜" Galvanized steel gussets (x4) welded to baseplate and pole
¾" Galvanized steel baseplate
¾" Galvanized threaded rod anchor bolts
Cylindrical concrete base and reinforcement to be designed by professional engineer licensed with PEO.
⅝" x ¾" galvanized steel coupler
max. 1"
Front View
Side View
• .080 Aluminum cover to conceal baseplate and hardware.
• Fabricator shall submit cover detail for approval prior to fabrication
P2b inherent finish back of sign
4"
Welded bracket assemblies:
• 3" Dia. aluminum post collars
• ⅛" Aluminum gussets welded to collar and top flange recommended for added strength of bracket detail
• Fasten to pole with ⅝" tamper proof thru bolts.
10"
4"
Sign Panel Back
Scale: ½" = 1'-0"
Concrete base
⅞" Dia. holes (typ.)
11" typ.
8" o/c typ.
¾" Steel Baseplate
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"


1'-0"
sign panel
V1 vinyl graphics applied to face
• Font: Clearview Highway 2-W (typ.) centred horizontally
• 1 ¼" Cap height
• 1 ¾" Arrow
¾" Solid plastic core aluminum composite panel (Alupanel or approved equal with inherent P1b finish)
Local Heroes Tour
5 ¾"
7 ¾"
6 ¾"
1'-5"
sign panel
A
±5'-7"
4'-0"
1"
Full colour graphic image:
3M exterior grade ControlTac digital graphic applique
#10 stainless steel wood screws:
• Positioned to avoid all vinyl graphics on the face of the sign
• Finish visible bolt heads with P1 paint to camouflage visibility.
4" x 4" Rot resistant timber: e.g. hemlock, cedar, or approved equivalent
Uchannel size: 2 lb/ft
Front View
Front View
Side View
≥ 5'
18" Sonotube:
• Embed in soil and backfill with compacted stone dust
• Post shall extend the full depth of the footing
℄
Sign Panel Back
Scale: ½" = 1'-0"
Alternate Layout:
North Simcoe Loop Trail
1"
10" x 10" space for logos
Alternate Layout:
Woodland Trail
1"
1"
5"
V1 vinyl applique icon
Alternate Layout:
Motorcycle Parking Only
1"
1"
V1 vinyl applique icon
10" x 10" space for logos



Refer to Pd-1a for full graphic layout details

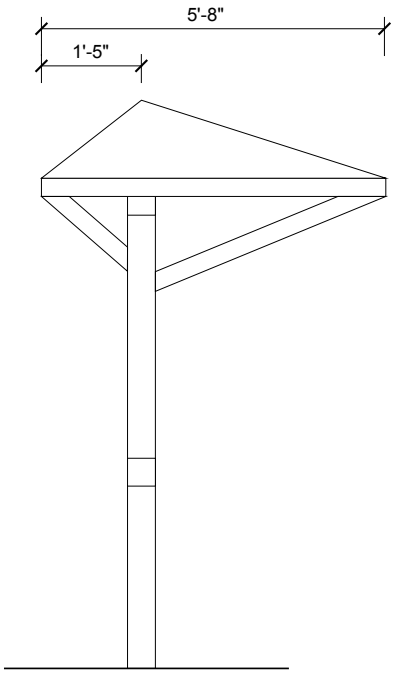
- Background of graphic shall match P1 in Pantone value
- Graphic proof approval required before panel is produced

Entire kiosk graphic panel shall be G1a or G2a graphic panel.

- In either instance, a ¾" marine grade plywood mounting substrate shall be provided behind the graphic held in place with wood blocking.
- Graphic shall be adhered to substrate per manufacturer's specificatons for outdoor installations to prevent warping.
- After cutting (if required) and prior to installation, plywood sheet shall recieve a minimum of one (1) coat of exterior oil-based paint.
- Prior to painting all edges shall have a single (brush or roller) application of West System Expoxy or approved equivelant.

Capture ends with 1" wood trim to prevent delamination

Concrete base footing and reinforcement shall be designed by professional engineer licensed with PEO.



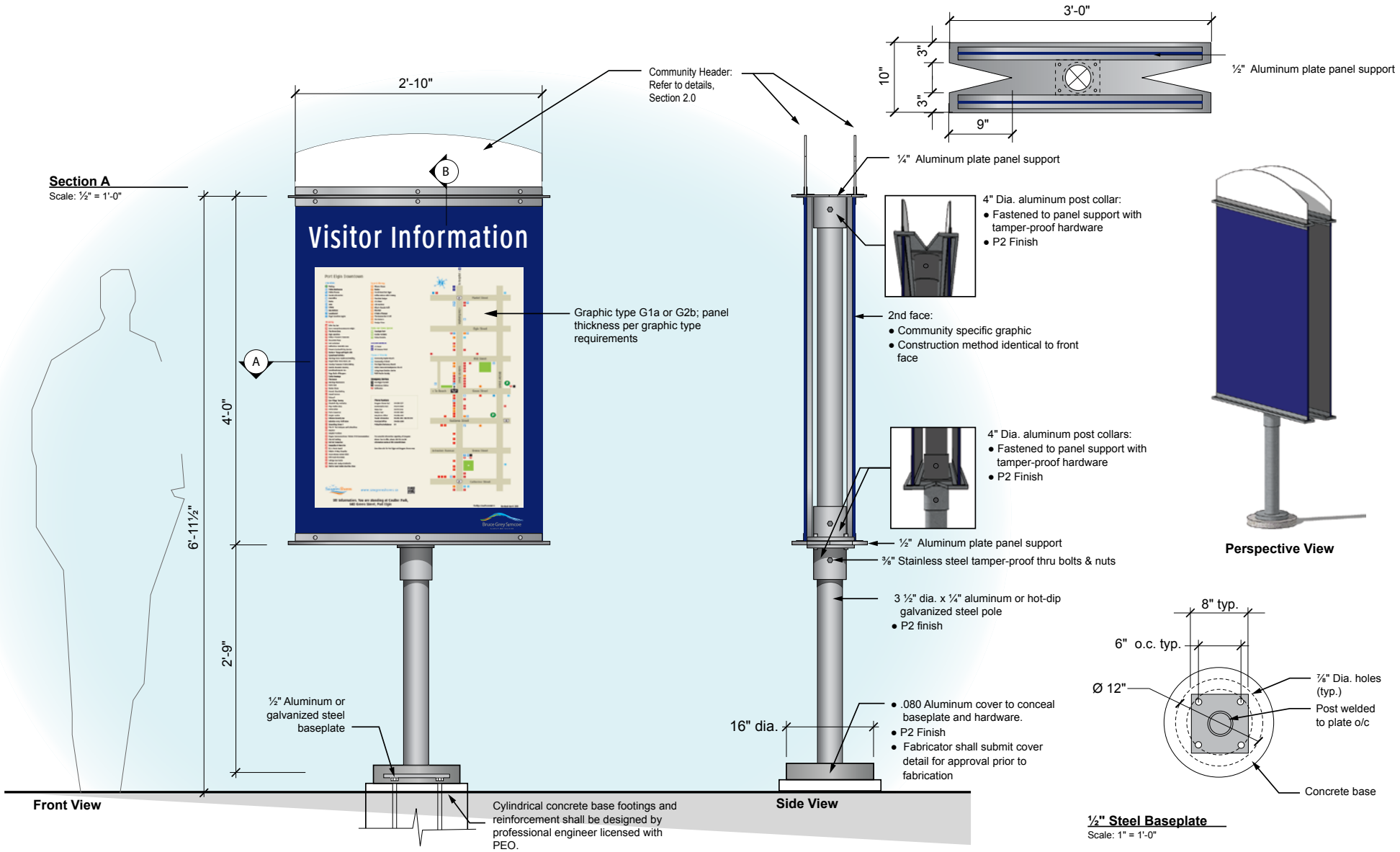
Example of Bruce County Trail Kiosk

Dimensions are approximate.

Kiosk structure shall be constructed to match existing kiosks in each community.

Kiosk design by Others.

If the map directory is to be placed in an existing kiosk unit, the fabricator shall be responsible for confirming the installation area prior to fabrication.


Section A
Scale: ½" = 1'-0"
2'-10"
Community Header: Refer to details, Section 2.0
Visitor Information
Graphic type G1a or G2b; panel thickness per graphic type requirements
4'-0"
6'-11½"
2'-9"
½" Aluminum or galvanized steel baseplate
Front View
Cylindrical concrete base footings and reinforcement shall be designed by professional engineer licensed with PEO.
3'-0"
10"
3"
3"
9"
½" Aluminum plate panel support
¼" Aluminum plate panel support
4" Dia. aluminum post collar:
• Fastened to panel support with tamper-proof hardware
• P2 Finish
2nd face:
• Community specific graphic
• Construction method identical to front face
4" Dia. aluminum post collars:
• Fastened to panel support with tamper-proof hardware
• P2 Finish
½" Aluminum plate panel support
⅜" Stainless steel tamper-proof thru bolts & nuts
3 ½" dia. x ¼" aluminum or hot-dip galvanized steel pole
• P2 finish
16" dia.
• .080 Aluminum cover to conceal baseplate and hardware.
• P2 Finish
• Fabricator shall submit cover detail for approval prior to fabrication
Side View
Perspective View
8" typ.
6" o.c. typ.
Ø 12"
⅞" Dia. holes (typ.)
Post welded to plate o/c
Concrete base
½" Steel Baseplate
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"

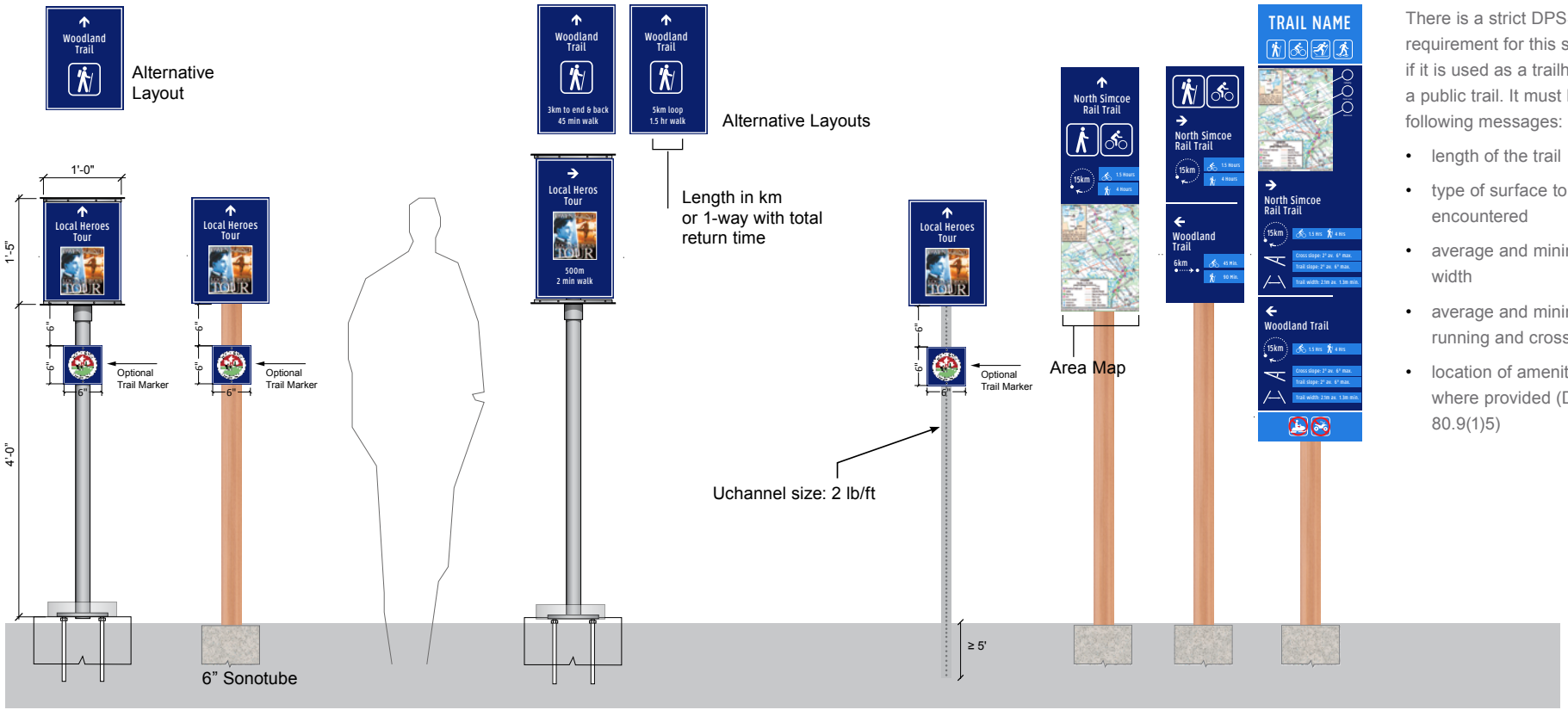
Sign Type Layouts: Revised for Active Transportation

TRAIL MARKER: PW-1A & PW-1B

Existing Urban & Rural
Walking Tour and Trail Guide

Proposed
Walking Tour and Trail Guide

Proposed Alternative Layouts
with Area Maps with the inclusion of
Cycling Distances



There is a strict DPSS requirement for this sign type if it is used as a trailhead to a public trail. It must have the following messages:

- length of the trail
- type of surface to be encountered
- average and minimum trail width
- average and minimum trail running and cross slope
- location of amenities, where provided (DPSS 80.9(1)5)

Urban PW-1A Rural PW-1B

7.2 Sign layout guidelines

- For legibility, sign units should have no more than a specific number of lines according to the signage type. (Please refer to the chart on the right)
- Destinations should be listed in the following order
- 1. All left turn destinations in descending order from nearest to farthest
- 2. All right turn destinations in descending order from nearest to farthest
- 3. All straight ahead destinations in descending order from nearest to farthest
- A graphic proof must be submitted for all graphic layouts for client approval before printing and fabrication

Character lengths Below is the approximate number of characters that will fit on one line of a given sign type.	**Message loads** Below is the maximum number of destinations that will fit on a given sign type.
Vh-1 12 characters per line / 15 maximum*	Vh-1 4 destinations
Vh-2 12 characters per line / 15 maximum*	Vh-2 2 destinations
Vh-3 12 characters per line / 15 maximum* Secondary message - 29 characters	Vh-3 1 destination
Vu-1 12 characters per line / 15 maximum*	Vu-1 4 destinations
Vu-2 Primary message – 8 characters Secondary message – 12 characters	Vu-2 5 destinations
Vu-3 14 characters per line	Vu-3 1 destination
Vt-1 13 characters per line	Vt-1 2 destinations
Vt-2 12 characters per line	Vt-2 1 destination
Vt-2 12 characters per line	Vt-3 1 destination
Pw-1 12 characters per line	Pw-1 1 destination
Pw-2 12 characters per line ** Reduced letterspacing may be required to achieve maximum character lengths. Kerningor tracking should be done carefully so as tonot impede legibility. If kerning alone with proper legibility still does not allow enough space, abbreviations may be used.*	Pw-2 1 destination


Fathom
OWEN SOUND
BIKE
RENTALS