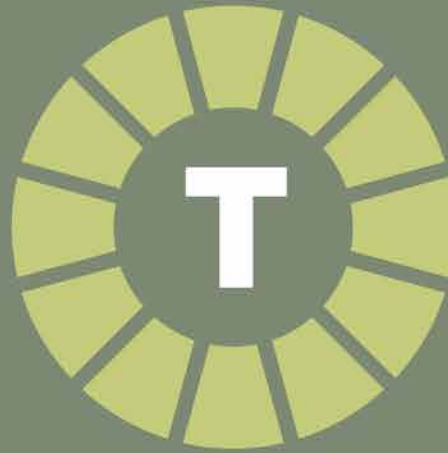


**WAYFINDING SYSTEM
STRATEGY FOR TORONTO
PARKS & TRAILS (PHASE ONE)**



Toronto Parks & Trails Wayfinding Strategy

PUBLIC CONSULTATION FORUM

WEDNESDAY JULY 30, 2014

AGENDA

- 1 WELCOME
- 2 PROJECT OVERVIEW
- 3 WAYFINDING CONTEXT
- 4 STRATEGY INPUTS
- 5 WAYFINDING STRATEGY
- 6 SYSTEM COMPONENTS
- 7 WAYFINDING PILOT
- 8 FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS

WELCOME

This presentation summarizes the outcomes of the Parks & Trails Wayfinding Strategy (Phase One) study, which began in January 2014.

The study aimed to establish robust foundations for the development and delivery of a consistent, high-quality wayfinding system for Toronto's parks & trails.

JANETTE HARVEY

City of Toronto - Parks,
Forestry & Recreation

PHIL BERCZUK

Partner-in-charge
Steer Davies Gleave

ANTONIO GÓMEZ-PALACIO

Partner-in-charge
DIALOG

TODAY'S EVENT

This Public Open House is the final consultation activity of Phase One.

It is the last opportunity for stakeholders and the general public to contribute and provide feedback to this project phase.

Phase Two, implementation of a Wayfinding Pilot, will commence in Fall 2014 offering further opportunity for comment.



ABOUT US › STEER DAVIES GLEAVE



CITY OF TORONTO
TORONTO 360° WAYFINDING
STRATEGY & PILOT IMPLEMENTATION



CUNDINAMARCA
TOURIST & INTERPRETIVE
SIGNAGE STRATEGY



SANTA MARTA
TOURIST WAYFINDING
STRATEGY

ABOUT US › DIALOG



TOWN OF TECUMSEH
LAKEWOOD PARK
PLAN



CITY OF LONDON
LONDON PLACEMAKING
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES



CITY OF TORONTO
UNION STATION PEER REVIEW
+ MASTER PLAN

2 PROJECT OVERVIEW



PROJECT OVERVIEW

With over 1,600 public parks and 600 km of trails, Toronto's parks system covers roughly 13% of the city's land area, is one of the city's greatest assets and is essential to local quality of life.

Establishing a unified wayfinding system and strategy for its implementation is critical for the parks' continued success and sustainability.



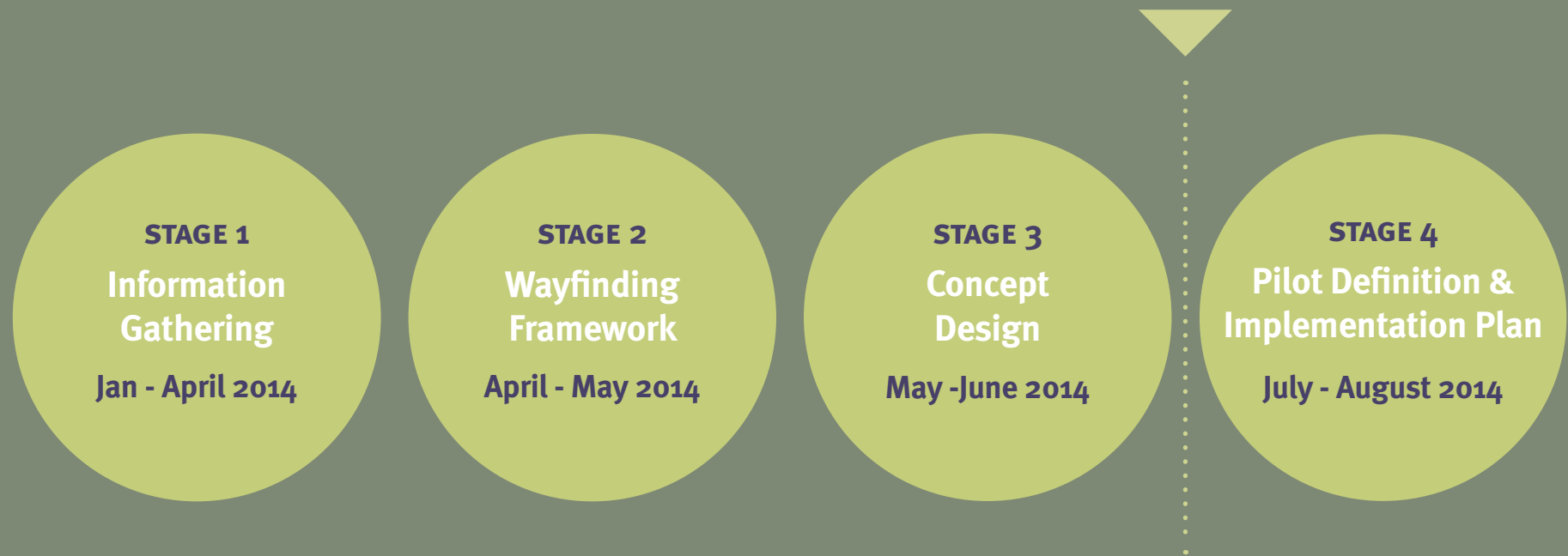
WAYFINDING CONTEXT › PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Phase One established strategic objectives and a design framework to inform Phases Two & Three:

- Provide consistent identification, orientation and navigation in and around parks and trails
- Encourage visiting, exploring and appreciation of Toronto's natural assets
- Serve all park and trail user types regardless of their abilities
- Reduce clutter and redundant infrastructure on parks and trails enhancing the natural environment
- Be economically viable and sustainable

PROJECT OVERVIEW › PROCESS

Phase One work program



PROJECT OVERVIEW › STRATEGY INPUTS

The Parks & Trails Wayfinding Strategy emerged from the project's three main activities:

OBSERVATION

General audits
Case study areas
Existing wayfinding

CONSULTATION

Interviews
Meetings
Pop-up consultation
Open House

RESEARCH

Policy & guidelines
Best practice review

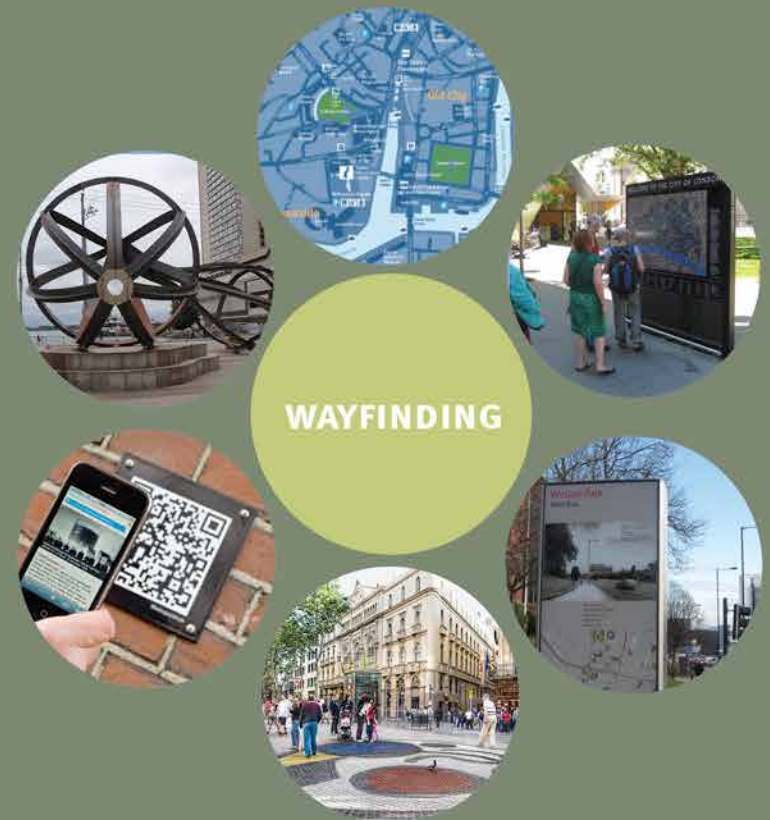
3 WAYFINDING CONTEXT



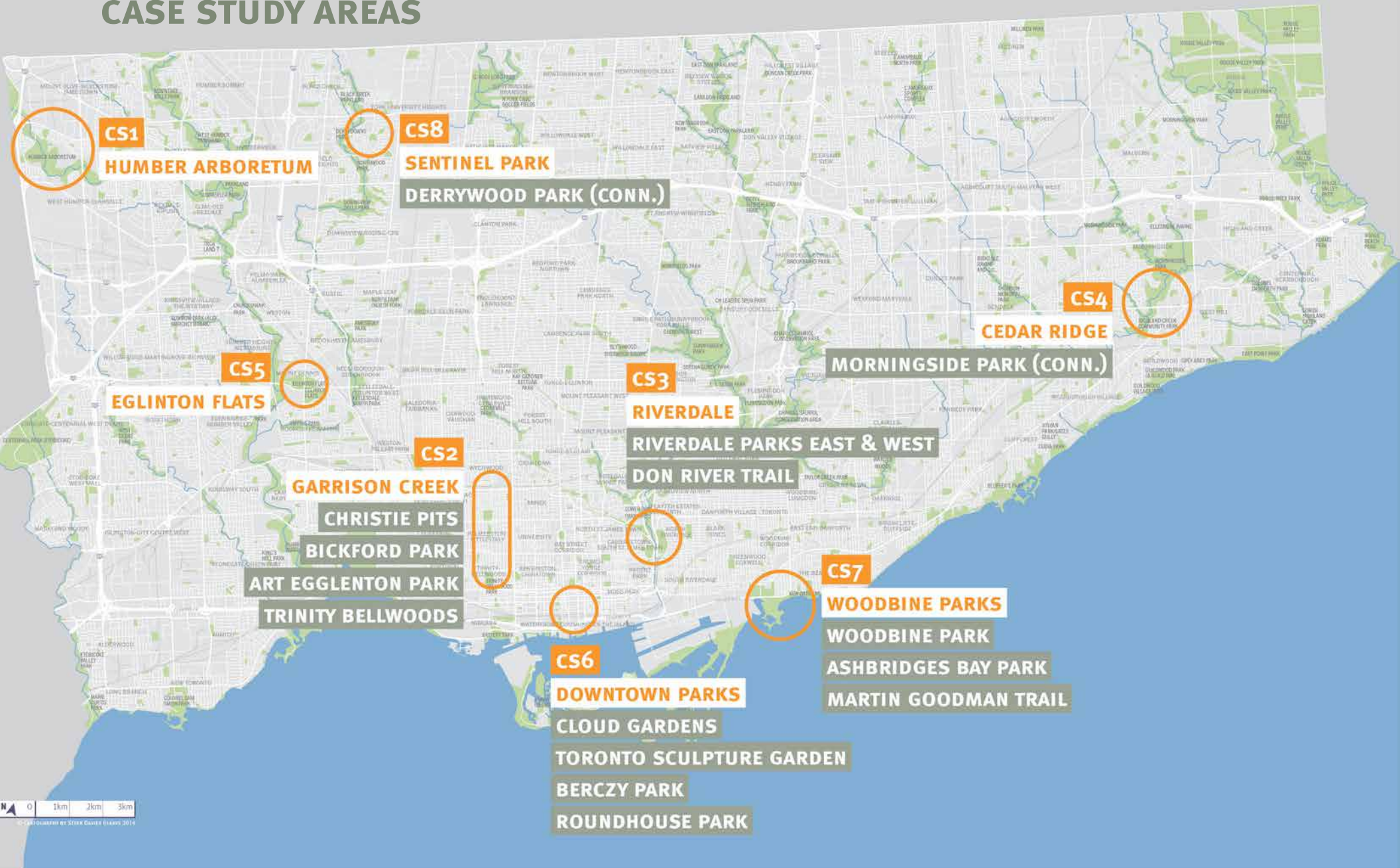
WAYFINDING CONTEXT › WHAT IS WAYFINDING

Wayfinding makes places ‘legible’, giving people confidence to find their way. It is more than signs and comprises:

- Signs
- Names
- Maps
- Lighting
- Street furniture
- Urban realm
- Public art
- Digital media (mobile/websites)



CASE STUDY AREAS



WAYFINDING CONTEXT › CONSIDERATIONS

- **Getting there** (information from transit, bus, parking)
- **Gateways** (how do you know you are there)
- **Understanding** (welcome, context, park function/role, park areas)
- **Moving around, navigating the parks** (toilets, sport facilities)
- **Activities** (sports, playground, commuter cycling, dog walking)
- **Statutory and regulatory**
- **Interpretation** (places, views, flora & fauna, animal life, heritage)
- **Getting away** (connecting back to transit/other parks)



WAYFINDING CONTEXT › EXISTING SYSTEMS

Toronto already has a municipal park signage system in place. Its primary functions are to identify (name and address), encourage positive and discourage negative behaviors, and enforce by-laws.

These signs are visually consistent with the City of Toronto's identity program.



WAYFINDING CONTEXT › EXISTING SYSTEMS

The majority of existing signs in parks and trails show some level of deterioration due to:

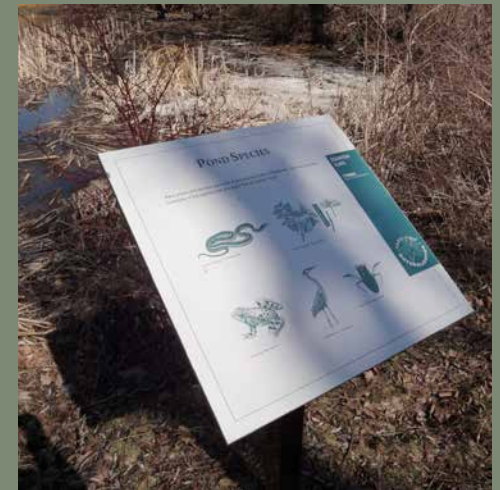
- **Weather** due to poor water-proofing
- **Sun and light exposure**
faded graphics and colours
- **Age** deterioration of timber and finishing
- **Vandalism** such as graffiti



WAYFINDING CONTEXT › EXISTING SYSTEMS

Alongside municipal parks signing there are many other overlapping systems:

- Discovery walks
- Multi use trails
- Interpretation
- Heritage
- Customized or park specific
- Other planned and ongoing initiatives



WAYFINDING CONTEXT › GAPS

Site visits, observations and user engagement across the eight case study areas identified five fundamental gaps/issues with current parks & trails wayfinding.

- Clutter and repetition
- Information overload / gaps
- Accessibility
- Content and naming hierarchy
- Attractiveness

WAYFINDING CONTEXT › GAPS



4 STRATEGY INPUTS



STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION > INTERVIEWS

We had conversations with over 30 stakeholder organizations and special interest groups including:

PARKS OPERATIONS

TOURISM

TRAILS / WALKING

PARK / WATERSHED ADVOCATES

CYCLING

ACCESSIBILITY

CULTURE / HERITAGE

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

RECREATION

LIFE SAVING STATIONS AND EMS

WATERFRONT

PAN AM GAMES

POP-UP CONSULTATION > WHAT WE DID

Pop-up events held at four sites over two days:

- Berczy Park, Friday June 13
- Trinity-Bellwoods Park, Friday June 13
- Evergreen Brick Works, Saturday June 14
- Toronto Island Ferry Terminal, Sat. June 14

Free lemonade and four interactive panels.



POP-UP CONSULTATION > WHAT WE DID



STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION > WHAT WE HEARD

There was broad consensus on the current situation and the gaps that the new system will need to address.

- Toronto park signage needs an overhaul!
- Identity, diversity, uniqueness of place
- Too much clutter, need to consolidate...
- Positive and consistent messaging
- Sustainable and low maintenance
- Make wayfinding accessible and safe
- Address conflicts on paths and trails
- Prioritize distance, location, and exits
- Need a park & trail information centre



INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

A broad range of international parks wayfinding systems were reviewed including:

Battery Point Trail, AUS

Durham Parks & Recreation, USA

High Line, NYC, USA

Lisbon Cycle Trail, Portugal

MBC Trail, Australia

National Mall & Memorial Parks, USA

Stockwell Park, UK

Islington Greenspace, UK

NYC Parks, USA

The Parklands, AUS



5 WAYFINDING STRATEGY



WAYFINDING STRATEGY

-
- Toronto Parkland wayfinding principles
-
- Interaction with other systems (current and on-going projects)
-

WAYFINDING STRATEGY › OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities to address identified gaps include:

- **Gateways:** consolidate, rationalize and re-present welcome and context information
- **Navigation:** improve legibility, visibility and direction to and of key parklands facilities, amenities and features
- **Connect with the city:** improve transitions between parklands and the city
- **Accessibility:** meet with the needs of all parklands users and improve understanding of route accessibility
- **Clutter:** rationalize signs and reduce repetition
- **Robust and maintainable:** consider location and design to ensure durability to climatic conditions and minimize impact of vandalism
- **Modular and adaptable:** meet with the needs of Toronto's Parkland typologies and seasonal variations

WAYFINDING STRATEGY > PRIORITIES

Helping people to understand, access, enjoy, appreciate, learn from and respect parklands requires a combined effort before, during and after visits

Complementary visitor information delivered via printed and digital media will maximise impact and help target and customise content for specific audiences.

On-site wayfinding signage must primarily focus on identification, welcome and point-to-point navigation in and around parklands.



WAYFINDING STRATEGY › TO360 STRATEGY

Toronto's 360° Wayfinding Strategy provides a thematic framework to inform the development of a Parks & Trail Wayfinding System

Principles under each theme comprise wide-ranging guidance—from standards to project aspirations and user needs.

The framework summarizes elements for consideration through detailed design and implementation to ensure system delivery is consistent with the strategy vision.



WAYFINDING STRATEGY › TO360 DESIGN FRAMEWORK

CONSISTENCY			TRANSITION	BEING LOCAL
Consistency of content and presentation is fundamental for effective wayfinding	Cater to the needs of all user types	Consider full life cycle costing and ability to adapt to change	Connect places and facilitate third party input to enable people to move seamlessly from one mode, system or area to another	Celebrate and promote the city and its districts. Empower community participation and input
Hierarchy	Physical access	Reduce clutter		Landmarks
Conventions	Contrast	Flexibility		Local character
Positioning	Accessibility	Extendability		Historic names
Structures	Technology	Future proof	Multi-modal	Placemaking
			Reciprocity	
			Route legibility	
			Fill the gaps	

WAYFINDING STRATEGY › OPPORTUNITIES

While the TO360 principles are broadly applicable they need to be translated into relevant design decisions for Toronto Parks & Trails.

Complementary principles for Parks & Trails signing include:

- A user-based approach
- Simplicity
- Placement
- Visual language and identity
- Integrated with surroundings
- Modular and easily updateable
- Encourage interaction
- A sign for all seasons

6 SYSTEM COMPONENTS



SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Phase One proposes a sign family of six basic product types aiming to maximize impact and effectiveness while rationalizing the number of structures:

- Gateway
- Directional
- Park Hubs
- Facilities
- Trail Marker
- Interpretation



SYSTEM COMPONENTS



GATEWAY

Where?

At park & trail pedestrian and vehicular gateways/entrances

PARK HUBS

Where?

At parks hubs i.e. inner gateways, and significant places such as ponds, path intersections/parking access

DIRECTIONAL

Where?

At decision points (path intersections) and secondary park entrances

INTERPRETATION

Where?

At view points and significant places of natural, historical or cultural interest

FACILITIES

Where?

At entrances to internal parks facilities, such as sport grounds, community gardens, off-leash dog areas

TRAIL MARKER

Where?

At trail entrance-exit points, along trails, at frequent intervals and/or related to memorable places and at on-street segments of trails

SYSTEM COMPONENTS › INTERACTIONS

Integration with existing systems is a core requirement of the Toronto Parks & Trails (TP&T) wayfinding strategy.

- Waterfront trail
- Discovery walks
- Pan Am Path
- Aboriginal trail markings
- Lifesaving stations
- Heritage Toronto
- Fort York
- Disc golf signage

...



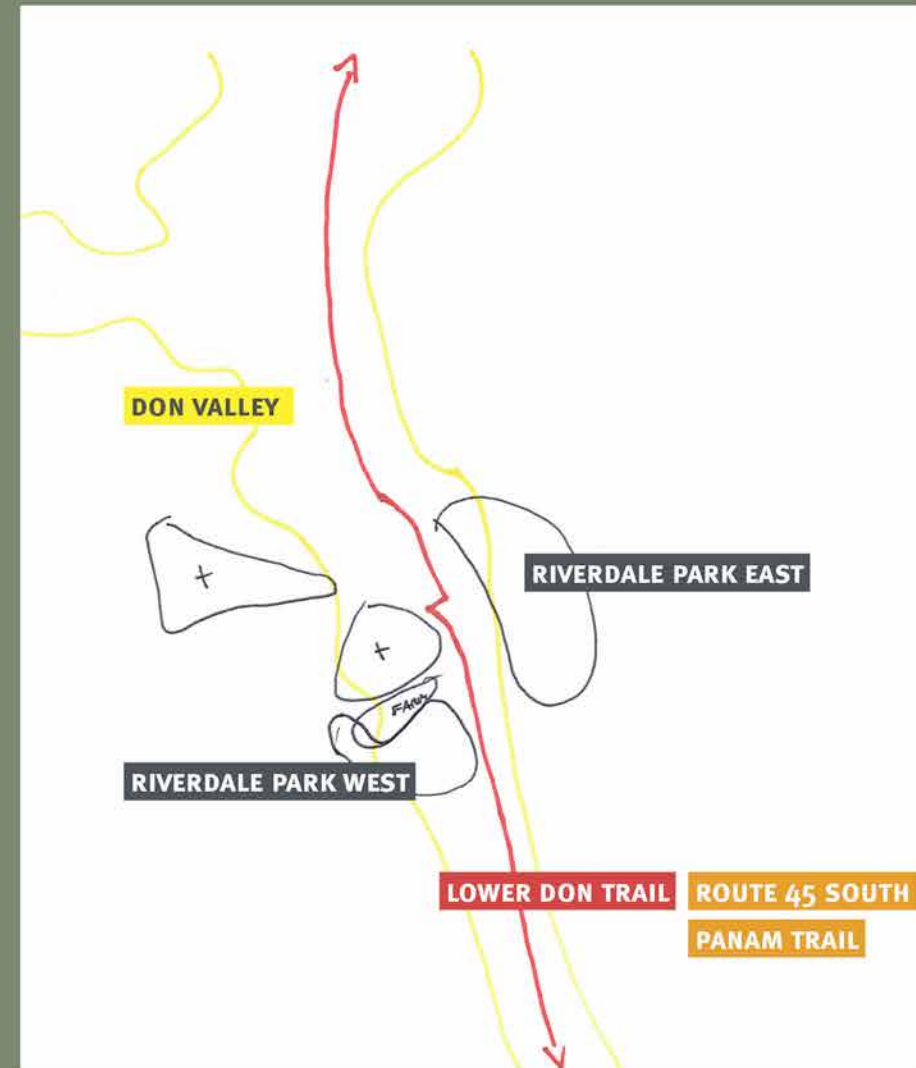
7 WAYFINDING PILOT



WAYFINDING PILOT

The implementation of a Parks & Trails Wayfinding Pilot Scheme is scheduled for 2015.

The Pilot will enable sign designs, information, materials and finishes to be evaluated in context and inform design refinements and value engineering prior to a future citywide rollout.



WAYFINDING PILOT AREA > INTRODUCTION

Pilot area selection rationale and opportunities:

- Broadly representative of issues observed across case study areas: naming, connections to/from city, access and navigation, clutter and poor maintenance
- Connected to Lower Don Trail and Discovery Walks
- Lower Don Valley masterplan
- Funding availability
- Implementation prior to PanAm Games



WAYFINDING PILOT AREA > ISSUES



Clutter and poor maintenance: many signs in the Lower Don Trail and some in Riverdale Parks display signs of disrepair, graffiti, fading, or are overgrown with vegetation.



Access and navigation: connections and exits from the Lower Don Trail are limited with very few step free routes. Routes are not graded and accessibility and path maintenance varies.



Naming and identification: a naming hierarchy is required to identify overlaps with the wider area, the trail, adjacent parks and park destinations.



Poor integration and awareness of other parks/trails: Riverdale park signs ignore the connection to the Lower Don Trail and vice versa. There is no support for connections.



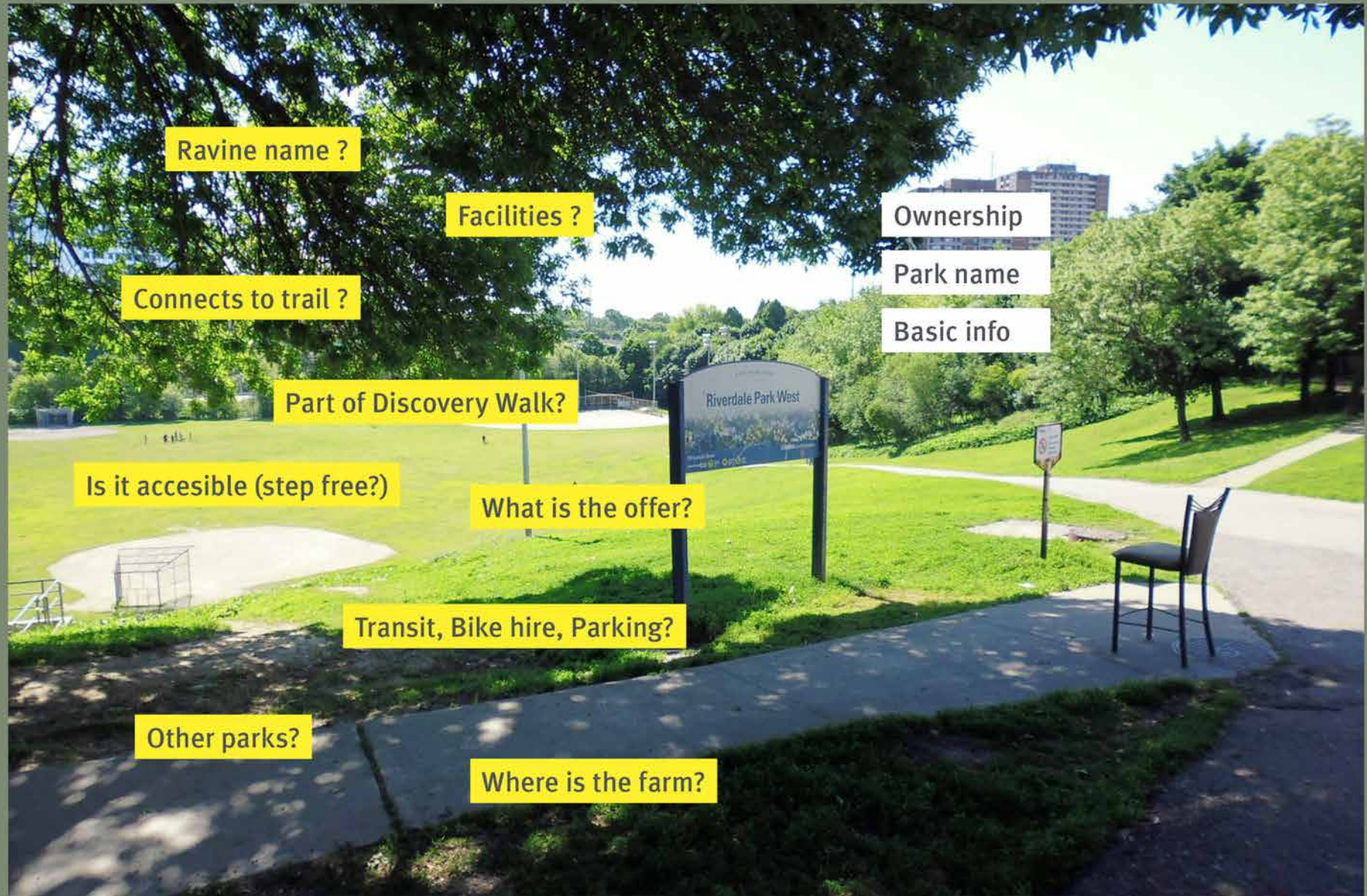
Connections to/from the city: parks & trails wayfinding signage should link back to city destinations and points of reference. Equally, access to parklands from the city requires additional support as routes are not intuitive.

WAYFINDING PILOT AREA › SCOPE



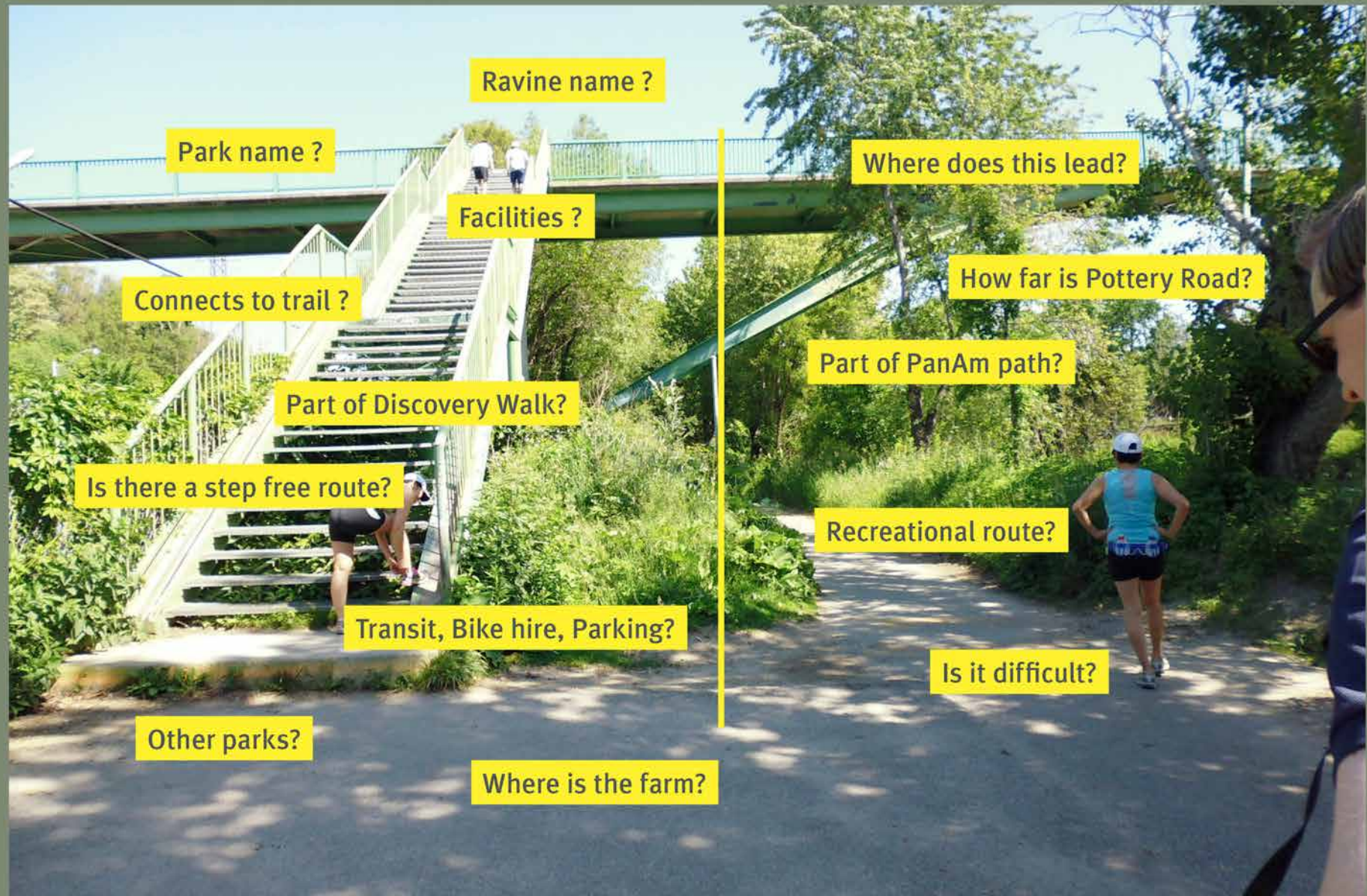
WAYFINDING PILOT AREA > INFORMATION NEEDS

Gateways



WAYFINDING PILOT AREA > INFORMATION NEEDS

Hubs/decision points



WAYFINDING PILOT > NEXT STEPS

Following completion of the Toronto Parks & Trails Wayfinding Strategy in August 2014, the City will proceed with Phase Two – pilot implementation.

Phase Two includes consultation with stakeholders, detailed graphic and product design, and implementation in the Lower Don Pilot Area.

Phase Two is expected to be complete in advance of the Toronto Parapan/ Pan Am Games in July 2015. The City will undertake a pre- and post-evaluation of the pilot.

8 FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS

Thank you!

CONTACT US

JANETTE HARVEY

City of Toronto
Parks, Forestry & Recreation
parkwayfinding@toronto.ca
(416) 392-1339

GAIL SHILLINGFORD

DIALOG
GShillingford@dialogdesign.ca
(416) 849-6825
