

City of Toronto Parks & Trails
Wayfinding Strategy
Phase Two



Toronto Parks & Trails Digital Wayfinding Strategy

Stakeholder Workshop & Discussion #1

Wednesday January 28, 2015

1 Welcome



Welcome, Agenda, Team, and Overview

Agenda

- 1 Welcome, Agenda, Team, and Overview
- 2 Phase Two of the Parks & Trails Wayfinding Strategy
- 3 Discussion and group tasks
 - The current use of technology
 - Understanding how you use the Parks & Trails
 - Service content and its users
- 4 Wrap up

Welcome, Agenda Review, Introductions, and Overview

Today's Event

What's this session about?

We've brought you together to share information about the current state of the project as well as to hear any concerns or ideas you may have about wayfinding signs in Toronto's Parks & Trails, building on the work from Phase One of the project.

Why are we here?

This is our opportunity to collaborate with a wide community of people involved with or affected by this pilot project.

What's the aim?

Through a series of creative tasks, you will provide your ideas and inputs into the pilot project which will inform the digital component of the Parks & Trails wayfinding system.

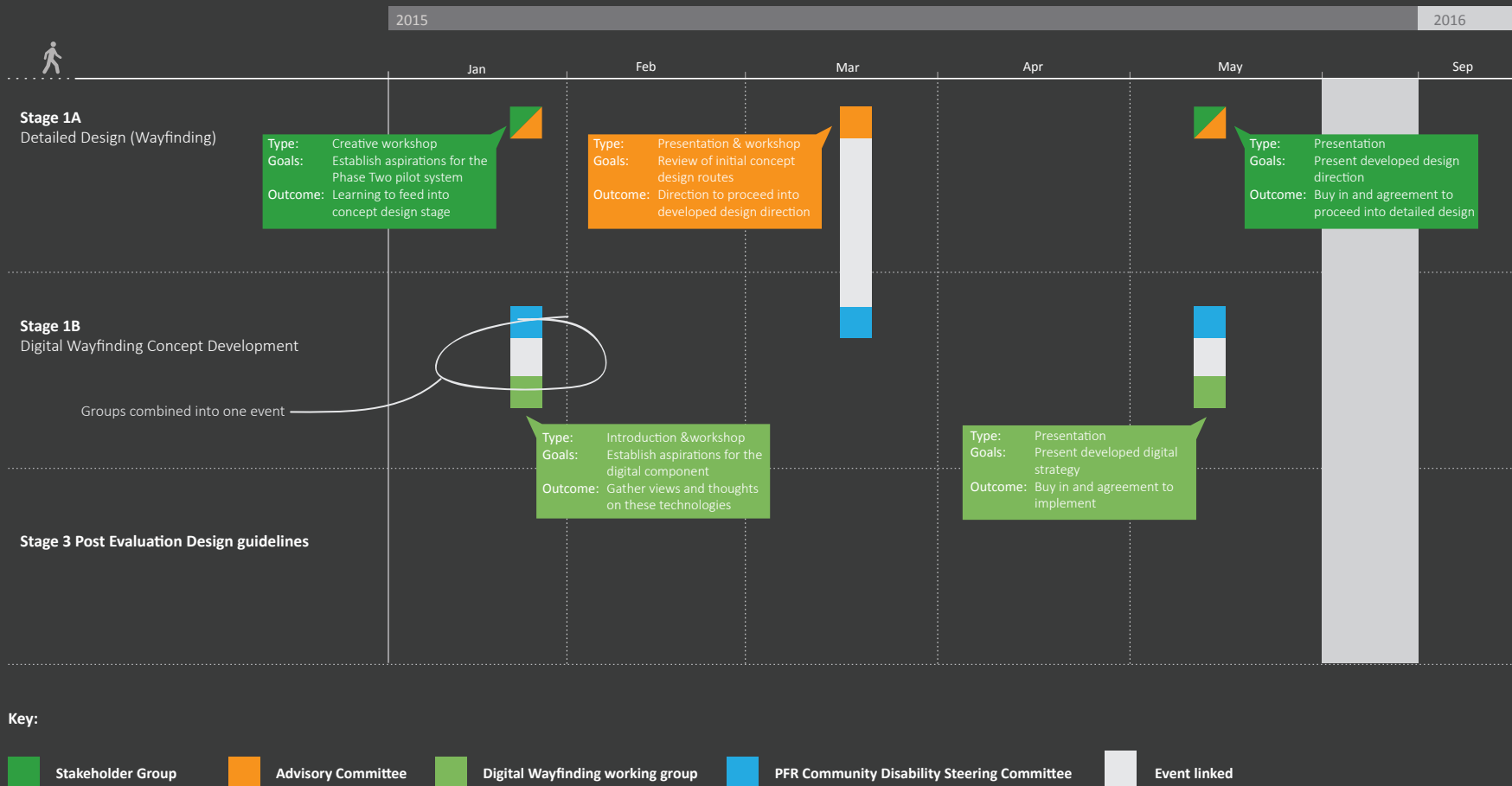
Welcome, Agenda Review, and Introductions

Consultation timeline

- Three consultation interactions across the Detailed Design Phase (Stage 1A)
- Three consultation interactions across Digital Wayfinding Concept Development Phase (Stage 1B)
- Stakeholder Group (Meeting twice)
- Advisory Committee (Meeting three times)
- Digital Wayfinding working group (Meeting twice)
- PFR Community Disability Steering Committee (Meeting five times)
- All events will be documented and feedback made available and shared amongst attendees

Welcome, Agenda Review, and Introductions

Consultation timeline - Diagram



2 Phase Two of the Parks & Trails Wayfinding Strategy



Phase Two

Project Scope

Following completion of the Toronto Parks & Trails Wayfinding Strategy in August 2014, the City is proceeding 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 implementation is expected to be complete in fall 2016. The City recently completed its pre evaluation and will undertake a post-evaluation of the pilot after this date.

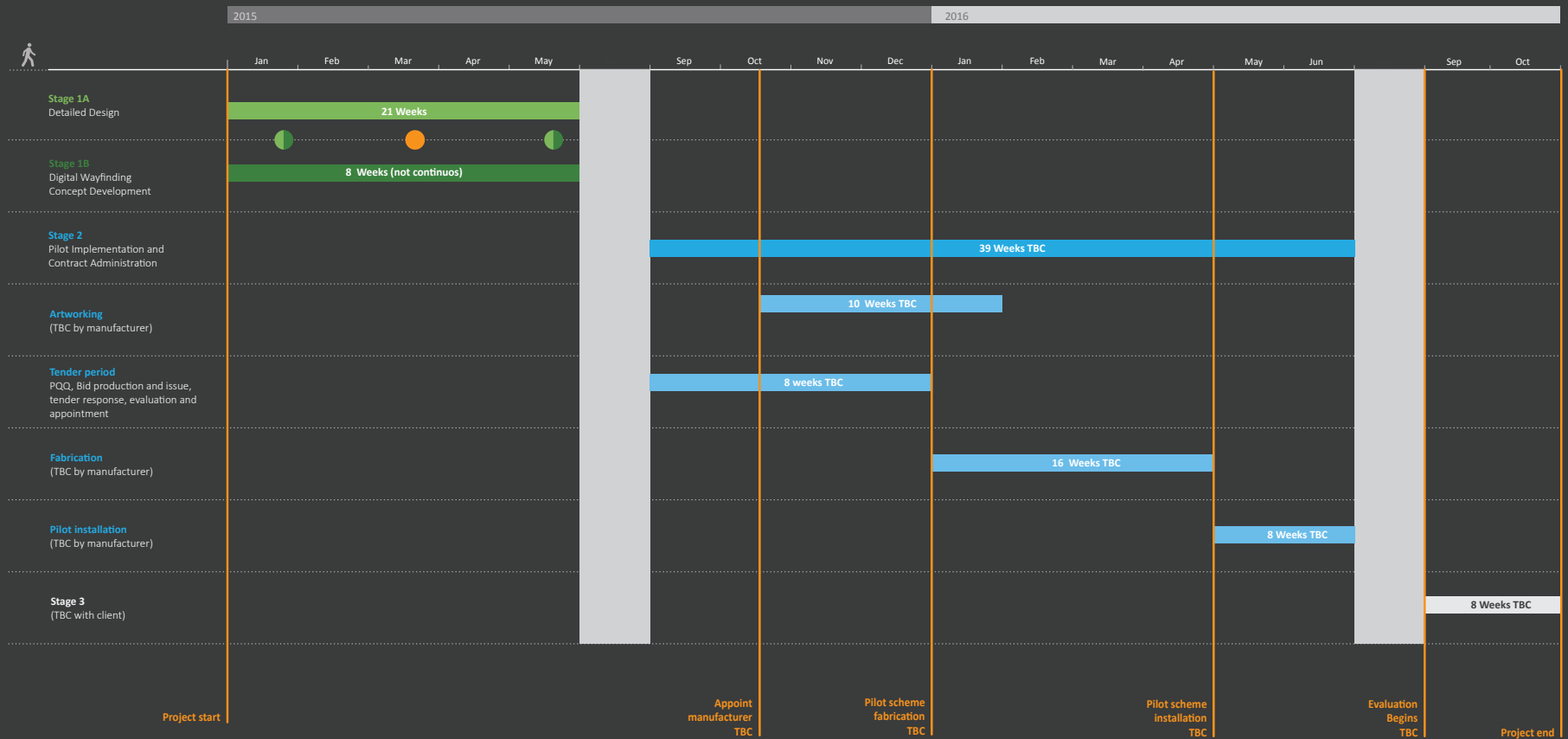
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Project timescales overview

- Detailed Design Phase (Stage 1A) and Digital Wayfinding Concept Development Phase (Stage 1B) to run in parallel
- Stage 1A and 1B to run between January and May 2015
- Output of Stage 1 will be a tender specification to allow the city to assess and appoint a suitable signage manufacturers
- Manufacturing of pilot late 2015 detailed timescales TBC
- Installation of the pilot wayfinding system will be late 2016
- Pilot analysis to take place from September 2016

Phase Two

Project timescales - Diagram

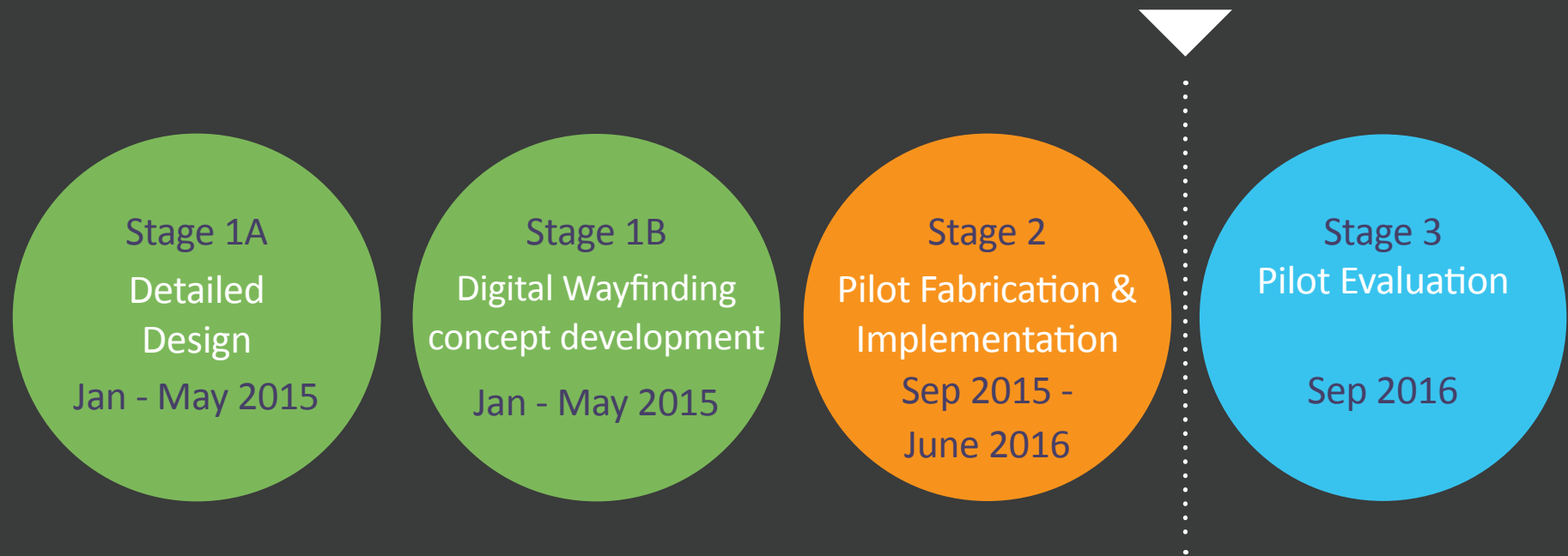


Key:

● Stakeholder Group ● Advisory Committee

Phase Two

Key milestones



Phase Two

Strategic Objectives

Phase One established strategic objectives and wayfinding considerations 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



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Digital Vision & Service Concept

The vision is for a digital wayfinding service to provide users with route, location and context specific information to enable them to explore Toronto's parks & trails.

Service Concept: A digital wayfinding service to provide users with route, location and context specific information to enable them to explore the Lower Don Valley. The service should be scalable for future city-wide application.

Phase Two

Digital Pilot Goals

- Test and evaluate the potential of current and near future technologies to deliver context specific information to park & trail users.
- Develop a scalable service/ solution that has the potential for future roll-out across the city.
- Adopt technology and delivery methods appropriate for the local environment and the needs of the target user groups.
- Deliver end user information to complement physical signage installed within the pilot area taking advantage of delivery platforms such as smartphones and wearable technology.

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Wayfinding Considerations

- **Getting there** (information from transit, bus, parking etc.)
- **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)
- **Interpretation** (places, views, flora & fauna, animal life, heritage)
- **Getting away** (connecting back to transit/other parks)
- **Statutory and regulatory**





Phase Two

The 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





Phase Two

Stakeholder feedback

Broad consensus on the current situation and the gaps that the new system will need to address:

- Reflect identity, diversity, uniqueness of place
- Too much clutter, need to consolidate...
- Lack of positive and consistent messaging
- Be 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



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Opportunities to address gaps

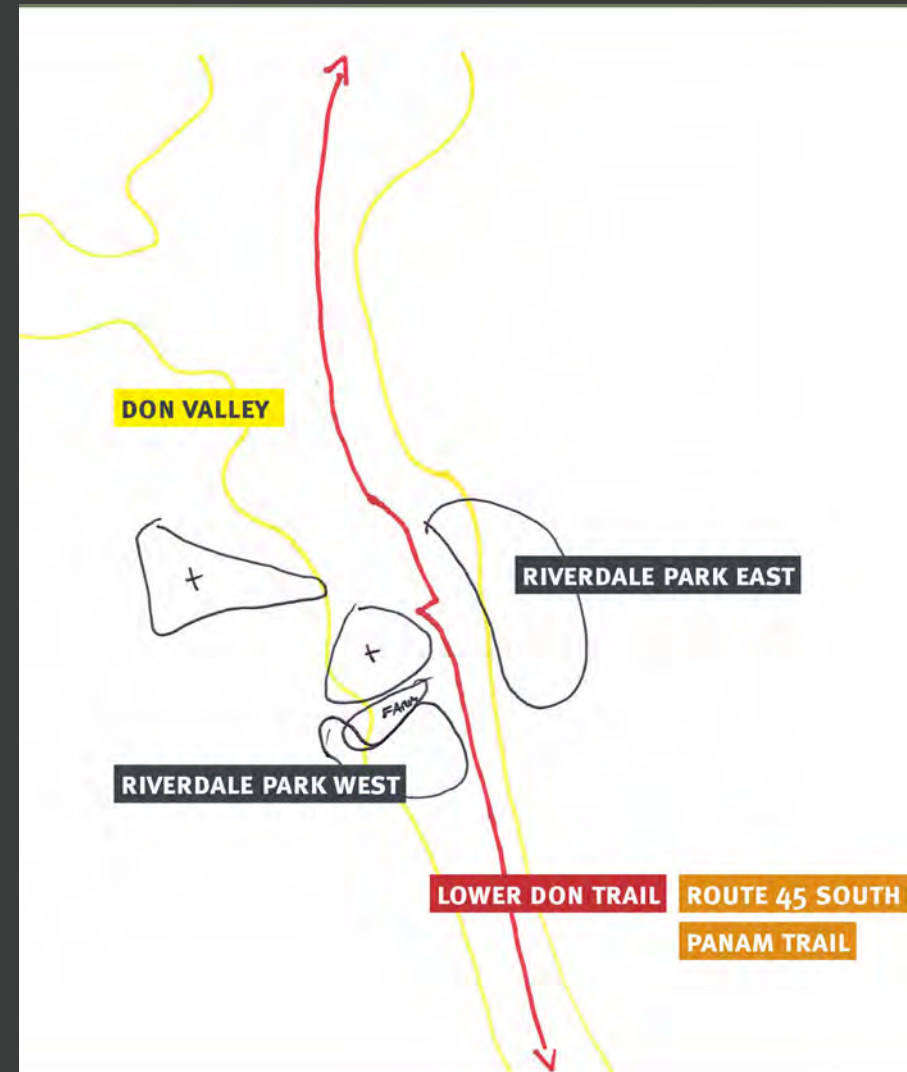
- **Gateways:** consolidate, rationalize and re-present welcome and context
- **Navigation:** improve legibility, visibility and direction to and of key parks & trails facilities, amenities and features
- **Connect with the city:** improve transitions between parks & trails and the city
- **Accessibility:** meet with the needs of all parks & trails 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 parks & trails typologies and seasonal variations

Phase Two

Lower Don Valley Pilot area introduction

The implementation of a Parks & Trails Wayfinding Pilot Scheme is scheduled for fall 2016.

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 roll-out.



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Lower Don Valley 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, Discovery Walks and the Pan Am Path
- Lower Don Valley masterplan
- Funding availability



Phase Two

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.

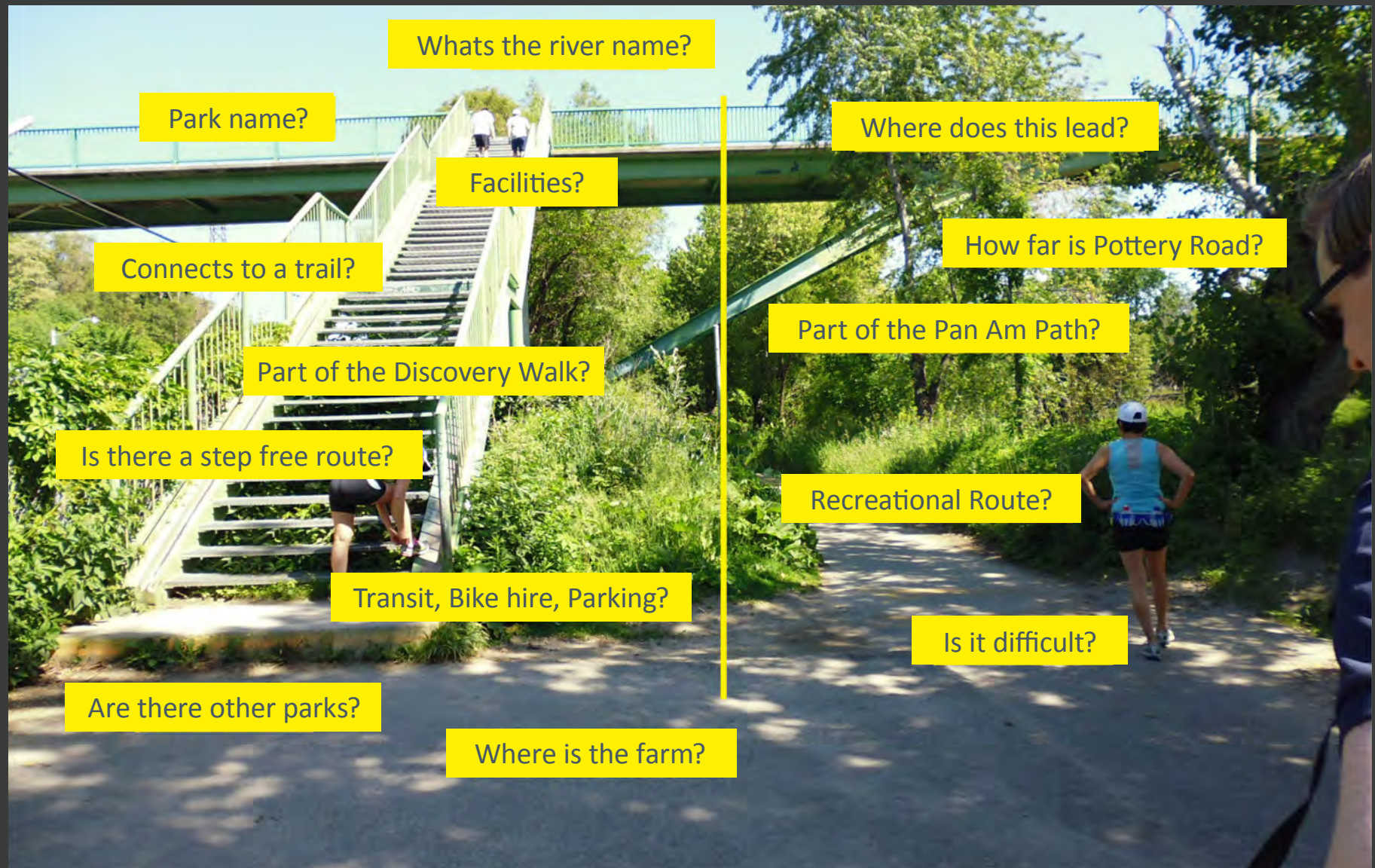
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Pilot area information needs: Gateway



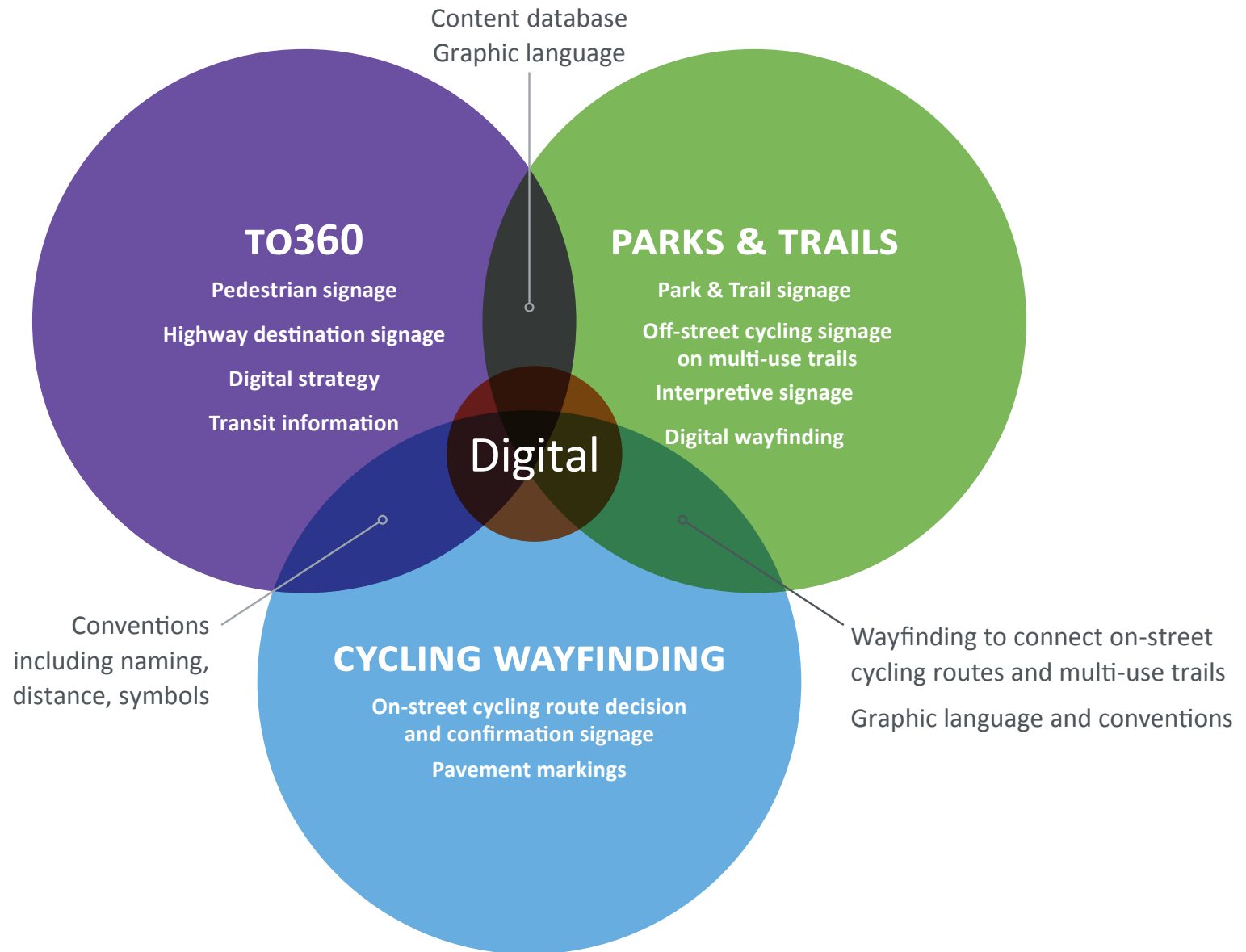
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Pilot area information needs: Decision point



Phase Two

Project overlaps



Wish List

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



Wish List

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



Wish List

Indicative System Components



Gateway

At park & trail pedestrian and vehicular gateways/ entrances

Park hubs

At park hubs i.e. inner gateways, and significant places such intersections

Directional

At decision points (path intersections) and secondary park entrances

Interpretation

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

Facilities

At entrances to internal parks facilities, such as sport grounds, community gardens

Trail marker

At trail entrance/ exit points, along trails, at frequent intervals

Wish List

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
- ...



3 Discussions and group tasks



Current use of technology

Introduction

There are a range of technologies that could be used as part of the Digital Wayfinding Service.

We want to understand the types of technology that you are familiar with using and what it is that you do or do not like about them





Discussion

Your current use of technology

- What technologies, apps, or services do you use right now?
- What do you like about them?
- How would you improve them (if at all)?

Use of the Parks & Trails

Introduction

Different people use the parks in different ways. We want to understand how you use the parks, how you would like to use them in the future, and whether there are any barriers to their use

This will help us to define a Digital Wayfinding Service that responds to your needs and interests





Discussion

Use of the Parks & Trails

- How do you currently use the Lower Don Valley (or other parks)? Are there other ways you'd like to use parks that you're not able to right now?
- How could a digital wayfinding service improve or enhance the way you use the parks?



Report Back

Content and Users

Introduction

There are a lot of different interesting places, activities and features within the park environment.

We want to understand the information and user preferences that should be built into the Digital Wayfinding service functional specification.





Discussion

Use of the Parks & Trails

- What kind of content do you think the Digital Wayfinding System's different users might need?
- Is there any other content you think the Digital Wayfinding System should include?



Discussion

Use of the Parks & Trails

Consider the following needs of the following example users:

- Family day out – Anne is visually impaired and is taking her children for a picnic in the park
- Walking the dog – Chris is visually impaired and wants to take his dog for a walk in the park
- Limited mobility – Fiona is a wheelchair user and can struggle with uneven surfaces, but enjoys making the most of the outdoors
- Exercise - Katy is visually impaired and loves to run home after work and in her spare time



Report Back

4 Next Steps



Next steps

Wrap up

Deadline for feedback: February 4th

Please share any other feedback with Ian Malczewski at imalczewski@swerhun.com or (416) 572-4365

We will share a Draft Meeting Summary for you to review after February 4

Thank you for contributing



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