

Wayfinding Signage Process

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Wayfinding Signage

Wayfinding signage in the City of Sacramento provides an avenue to direct people to key civic, cultural, visitor and recreational attractions within the city and make the city more navigable. Wayfinding signage encompass signs that are strategically placed for the purpose of directing the traveler to their destination.

This guide provides the framework for the following elements of the Wayfinding Signage Process:

- Sign request review process
- Management of signs
- Destinations and Sign Elements

This guide will outline how and what the City will permit to be signed. The goal of this process is to foster a consistent image for the entire city; reduce visual clutter; and promote walking, bicycling, and the use of public transit.

Responding to the Need for Wayfinding

Traditionally, wayfinding signage was important to help drivers find destinations. However, in today's world with GPS in cars or drivers using smart phones for directions, wayfinding signage for driving is less important.

Wayfinding signage for those walking, taking public transit, or bicycling, however, still has value. Wayfinding signage supports local business districts and connects walkers, bicyclists, and public transit users as well as promote alternatives to driving.

Bikeway wayfinding is unique because it not only identifies destinations but can also identify the network of city designated bikeways. Not every street is amenable to bicyclists of all ages and abilities. The network of bikeways in the city is an excellent alternative for these users and wayfinding signage can help promote the bikeway network. Bikeway wayfinding is also unique because, unlike drivers who listen to directions on their mobile device, or pedestrians who may stop on a sidewalk to ask for directions, bicyclists can use the guidance signs while bicycling.

City Sponsored Wayfinding

The Public Works Department provides process support and design review for wayfinding efforts initiated by other City Departments. The Public Works Department will not install or manage wayfinding on behalf of department applicants. Department applicants, unless other outside or grant funding is available, are responsible for the cost of installation.

REVIEW PROCESS

General Guidance and Application

Wayfinding requests by qualified entities other than the City of Sacramento for a sign located within City Right of Way must be submitted as a Minor Encroachment and a Revocable Encroachment Permit by an applicant providing a single point of contact.

Qualified entities include: non-profit organizations, Property Business Improvement Districts (PBIDs), or other organizations that are geographically designated to serve the area in which the wayfinding signs will be installed. Individual people may not submit applications for wayfinding signage.

Applications must include a professionally designed and documented signage plan defining locations of signs, types of signs, sizes, heights, materials, illumination if any and colors.

Application and Timeline

For wayfinding signs placed on private property, the application follows a separate process where it may be required to obtain a sign permit from the Community Development Department (CDD), Building Division. See city code section 15.148 for further information on signage on private property.

Link: http://www.qcode.us/codes/sacramento/view.php?topic=15-15_148

For wayfinding signs proposed in the public right of way, a qualified entity must initiate the wayfinding sign request by following the Minor Encroachment and Revocable Encroachment Permit processes found on the City's website:

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Public-Works/Forms/Engineering/Development-Engineering/Encroachment-Permits/RevocablePermitApp.pdf?la=en>

Both the Minor Encroachment and Revocable Encroachment Permit applications must be submitted to the Development Engineering Division (DE) of the Public Works Department. Questions can be sent via email to: DE@cityofsacramento.org. Emails are typically responded to in two (2) business days.

Completed applications can be submitted electronically through this email as well. DE shall route completed applications to various city departments and divisions simultaneously for review based on specific site conditions. The following departments/divisions are typically part of the review process:

- Transportation Engineering Design Review(Public Works Department)
- Urban Forestry Design Review (Public Works Department)
- Design Review(Department of Utilities)
- Design Review (Community Development Department)
- Park Planning and Development Services (Youth, Parks, and Community Enrichment Department)
- Economic Development Department
- Any other city department or agency, as applicable

Development Engineering Division serves as the project manager for the applications and will ensure that correction notices are returned to the applicant with each review cycle. The applicant is responsible to incorporate any necessary changes to design and/or placement of the wayfinding signs for the subsequent plan review cycle. The City's goal is to obtain all discipline approvals at the completion of the third cycle review.

The City may require that relevant, nearby public destinations be identified within an applicant's larger wayfinding plan. For example, the City may require the inclusion of a community center or library in the listed destinations for a PBID-sponsored wayfinding plan. This will reduce sign redundancy and clutter.

After the application has been given final approval, the Applicant may begin sign fabrication.

For projects that require sidewalk closure or lane closure for construction of the wayfinding sign, a traffic control plan (TCP) will be required to be submitted and approved as a part of the minor encroachment permit. The applicant shall obtain all required permits for construction and signs.

For projects that are located on the levees, applicant shall coordinate with the appropriate agency with jurisdiction.

Management of Signs

Qualified entities are responsible for payment of city fees and, if applicable, other agency permitting fees. They are solely responsible for the fabrication, installation, and maintenance costs of the installed signs, pedestrian kiosks, and gateway monuments.

Wayfinding signs located in the public right of way shall be implemented under a Minor Encroachment and Revocable Encroachment Permit and shall be owned by the applicant. Revocable Permits require applicant provide liability insurance and the insurance shall be renewed annually for the period of time the signs are in place. Failure to repair damage to the signs from weather, vandalism, or other causes may result in cancellation of the Revocable Permit and removal of signs, at the applicant's expense.

DESIGN AND PLACEMENT OVERVIEW

Design

Wayfinding signs shall be in accordance with existing city sign standards captured in city code [Chapter 15.148](#)

Wayfinding signs shall not mimic or resemble a traffic control device in the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The design and appearance of wayfinding signs shall be contextually appropriate for the location.

Placement

Wayfinding signs shall not be installed in a position where they may obscure the road users' view of traffic control devices.¹ Guidance on sight distance is found in [Section 15.9 of the City's Design and Procedures Manual](#).

Wayfinding signs must be limited to areas where they do not block or interfere with signs necessary for safe and efficient operation of the roadway.

Wayfinding signs or kiosks shall not impede the pedestrian path of travel and must meet ADA standards. A minimum of 6 feet of clear sidewalk area must be maintained.

Destinations and Sign Elements

General Destination Criteria

To avoid the wayfinding signs being defined as off-site advertising and ensure the volume of wayfinding signs do not create sign clutter, a reasonable threshold is established for what qualifies to receive signage. Destinations on wayfinding signs typically should meet one of the following criteria:

1. Be an event location with demonstrated attendance of 15,000 + visitors to multiple events per year.
2. Be a recognized commercial corridor, district or area within the City including a Property and Business Improvement District (PBID).
3. Be a public amenity such as a community center, school, zoo, or public library.
4. Be a public or private higher educational facility that provides accredited degree programs.
5. Be a City of Sacramento community, regional park or regional parkway. Neighborhood parks shall not be signed, unless connected to a bike path.
6. Be a named public trail or shared-use path that is greater than two miles in length.
7. Be a public parking facility that accommodates more than 200 vehicles.

¹ CA MUTCD 2D.50.06, p. 344

8. Be a heavy rail, regional transit station, or bus transfer facility.
9. Be a hospital or other emergency facility (police, fire); and licensed or approved as such by the appropriate State authority.
10. Be a visitor/tourist accommodation, such as a hotel with a minimum of 100 guest rooms.
11. Be an airport with commercial flights.

Hierarchy

Wayfinding signs should typically be limited to no more than three destinations per sign.²

Prioritizing destinations is important since space is limited on wayfinding signs and the number of signs should be a consideration to avoid sign clutter. Suggested prioritization of destinations are as follows:

Prioritization	Classification	Definition
Primary	Districts	Neighborhoods, corridors, university campuses, and business districts
Secondary	Landmarks	Regional destinations, transit facilities, regional parks, convention centers
Tertiary	Local Attractions	Libraries, community parks, schools, public services, visitor amenities

Sign Location and Frequency

1. Signs shall be placed on appropriate city streets, with exception of bikeway wayfinding signage which may be placed only on the bikeway network including city streets and shared use paths (trails and paths).
2. Signs shall be placed at key locations, not at every decision point, following the likely path of travel by mode.
3. Signs shall be placed no more than one mile from the destination excepting Downtown which may be listed anywhere in the city to provide direction, and is recommended to be no more than a half-mile from the destination.

REFERENCES

California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices References

Vehicular Wayfinding

- Regulated by CA MUTCD 2D.50 Community Wayfinding Signs for wayfinding only
- Sized for viewing by drivers of moving vehicles
- One-sided
- Generally located mid-block (can serve pedestrians as well)

² CA MUTCD 2D.50.22, p. 346

- Reflective lettering

Bikeway Wayfinding

- Regulated by CA MUTCD 9B.21 through 9B.24
- Sized for viewing by moving bicyclists
- One-sided
- Generally located on intersection approach and intersection exit if direction changes
- Reflective lettering

Pedestrian Wayfinding

- Regulated by CA MUTCD 2D.50 Community Wayfinding Signs
- Smaller than vehicular or bikeway wayfinding, sized for viewing by standing or walking pedestrians
- May be one or two-sided
- Generally located parallel to street
- Non-reflective lettering

City References to Similar Policies

Honorary Street Sign Topper Policy

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Public-Works/Forms/Engineering/Development-Engineering/Encroachment-Permits/HonoraryStreetSignTopperPolicyR2016-0358.pdf?la=en>

Street-Light Pole Banner Policy

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Public-Works/Forms/Engineering/Development-Engineering/Encroachment-Permits/StreetPoleBannerPolicy5-15.pdf?la=en>

Definitions

Fabrication: The manufacturing of the approved sign, kiosk, or gateway monument.

Maintenance: The replacement of defective parts, painting, repainting, cleaning and other acts required for the up keep of approved sign to ensure the sign is safe, presentable, and in good condition.

Qualified Entity: a non-profit organization, a Property and Business Improvement District, or other organization that is geographically designated to serve the area in which the wayfinding signs will be installed. Individual people are not qualified entities.

Wayfinding: An information system that guide people through a physical environment and enhance their understanding and experience of the space.

Signing Authority

Department Director Review and Acknowledgement

Thomas S. Pace

Director of Community Development

Michael A. Jasso

Michael Jasso (Jul 21, 2021 10:26 PDT)

Director of Economic Development

[Signature]

Director of Public Works

William Busath

William Busath (Jul 20, 2021 14:29 PDT)

Director of Utilities

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Director of Youth, Parks, and Community Enrichment