M E M O R A N D U M

To: Mayor and Council

From: Greg Guernsey, Director, Planning and Zoning Department

Date: June 18, 2015

Subject: Downtown Austin Wayfinding Project Background

The Downtown Austin Wayfinding Project had its origins in the Downtown Austin Plan. The Plan recognized that a wayfinding system could provide a number of benefits including:

- Improve mobility by enabling more efficient use of Downtown parking resources by making it easier to find and utilize places to park.
- Reduce traffic congestion by helping create a "park once" environment in which Downtown users might arrive by car, but park just once and get around Downtown on foot or by other means without having to move to another place to park.
- Make for a better and friendlier tourist/visitor environment.
- Reinforce community identity, highlight key attractions, and reduce visual clutter.

Recommendation TP-1.5 of the Downtown Austin Plan included the following direction: "The City should develop a unified way-finding and signage system, indicating clear paths of travel to key destinations and major public facilities and cultural institutions. . . . The system should be designed to serve all modes of transportation and incorporate new communication techniques such as GPS, smart phone 'apps,' toll tags, etc. . . . As an integral part of the way-finding system, 'real-time' electronic signage should be developed to indicate public parking availability along major entries into Downtown, as well as the status of bus or rail arrivals at key transit stops." The Austin City Council adopted the Downtown Austin Plan on December 8, 2011, and directed the City Manager to implement the Plan.

The Downtown Wayfinding Project has been underway since 2011. The project scope has unfolded over four phases:

1. Phase One -- Preliminary Analysis: Information gathering, interviews, and analysis. Deliverable: Downtown Wayfinding Analysis and Recommendations.
2. Phase Two -- Schematic Design: Three alternative concepts incorporated into one, field survey, cost estimate, and preliminary programming. Deliverable: Downtown Wayfinding Master Plan. See: Downtown Austin Wayfinding Master Plan (June 14, 2013).

3. Phase Three -- Design Development: Deliverable: Downtown Austin Wayfinding Graphics Manual. See: Downtown Austin Wayfinding Graphics Manual (April 22, 2014).
4. Phase Four -- Implementation: Bid review and construction administration. Deliverable: Bid Documents and System Installation.

As part of the development of the deliverables, we sought input and received comments via many stakeholder meetings, briefings to Boards and Commissions, and City Council. Stakeholder consulted included the general design community, Austin Parks Foundation, Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association, the Downtown Austin Alliance, and Keep Austin Beautiful. We consulted at least four times with a project Steering Committee comprised of City staff and representatives from TXDOT, CapMetro, University of Texas, State of Texas, and Travis County. We provided two rounds of briefings and received comments from several Boards and Commissions (i.e. Design Commission, Downtown Commission, Historic Landmark Commission, Parks and Parks and Recreation Board, etc.). All of these stakeholders, boards, and commissions have generally supported these efforts and deliverables. City Council was last briefed on the overall Wayfinding Project on November 8, 2012.

All phases of the project have been funded from Downtown parking meter revenue, through the Austin Transportation Department. The contracts with MERJE, primary the Consultant for Phases 1-3 were executed in December 2011 and May 2013. Since then, staff and the Consultant have been working to complete the bid documents that were partially completed under Phase 3. The consultant contract for Phase 4, Implementation, has not been executed. This contract (in the amount of $144,324) is necessary so the consultants can provide valuable expertise regarding the bid documents, map graphics, and provide construction administration, all which requires their technical expertise. At this time additional authorization is needed to move forward with this phase of the project in the amount set forth in the RCA, anticipated to be taken up by Council on June 18, 2015.

To give you a better sense of the type of signage and other tools that will be installed as part of the overall Downtown Wayfinding system, I have attached a few pages from the Downtown Austin Wayfinding Graphics Manual, including elements of the “dynamic parking” system as well as static pedestrian signage.

Please feel free to call me with any questions at (512) 974-2387.

Attachment

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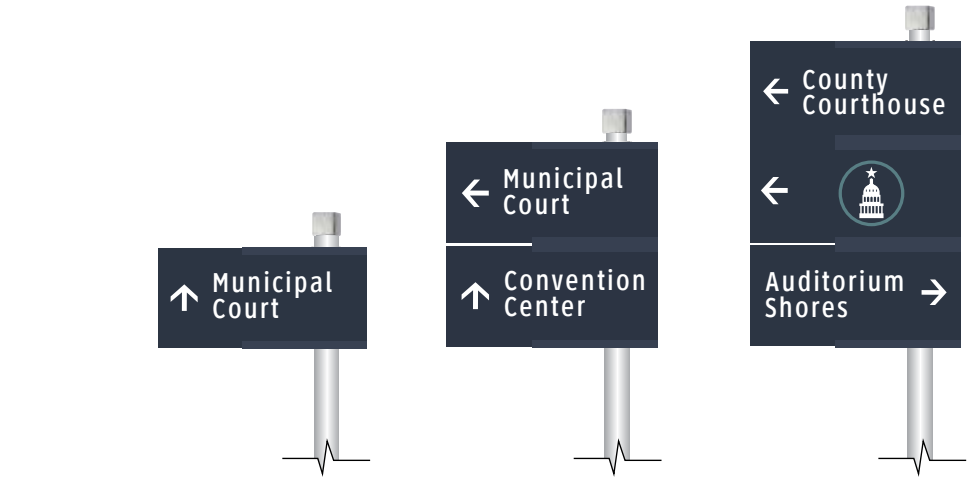


VDIR.1_LEFT **VDIR.2_LEFT** **VDIR.3_LEFT**

VDIR.1
Vehicular Directional
NEW POST
1 message

VDIR.2
Vehicular Directional
NEW POST
2 messages

VDIR.3
Vehicular Directional
NEW POST
3 messages

TEMP.1
Temporary Directional
Freestanding

TEMP.2
Temporary Directional
Magnetic
Pole Base

TEMP.2
Temporary Directional
Pole mount

VDIR.6
TXDOT Vehicular Directional
NEW POSTS / 3 messages

VDIR.4
TXDOT Vehicular Directional
NEW POST
1 message

VDIR.5
TXDOT Vehicular Directional
NEW POSTS
2 messages

DEST.1
Destination ID
SMALL

DEST.2
Destination ID
LARGE

SIGN MENU:
VEHICULAR

VEHICULAR DIRECTIONALS:
Vehicular directional signs are modular with panels that can be easily replaced. Signs can have 1-3 messages, and can hold either a graphic pictogram message or a text message.

For signs typically used on roadways with a speed limit of 25mph or less, per MUTCD section 2D.50, copy is 4" high, typeface is Clearview and both background and copy are retro-reflective. Sign posts are break-away. "Left-Mounted" versions are available for placement on opposite sides (left) of street.

There are also 3 TXDOT approved sign designs shown, with a different pole and break-away system. These signs have 6" high copy and are located along roads where the speed limit is over 25mph.

TEMPORARY SIGNS:
Temporary signs can easily be put up on existing poles or set out on sidewalks. A simple organized layout incorporating pictograms is easily read and understood by visitors.

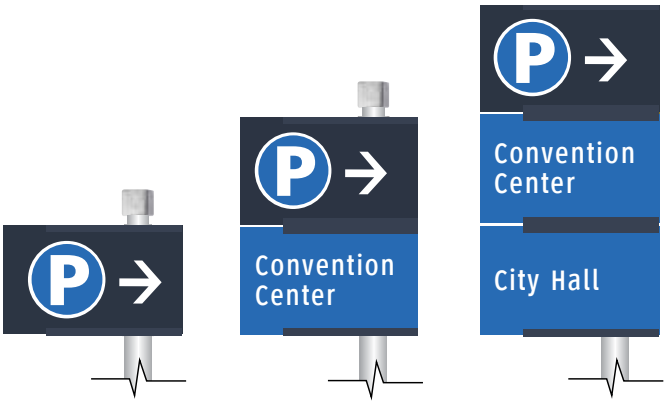
DESTINATION ID SIGNS:
Destination ID signs utilize design elements from both the Vehicular menu and Pedestrian menu (pg 22.8). The destination and space allotted for a sign will denote which sign is used.

SIGN MENU:
PARKING

Parking directional signs are modular with panels that can be easily replaced. Signs can have 1-3 messages, and can hold either a graphic pictogram message or a text message.

PARKING DIRECTIONALS:
Parking Directional Signs can direct to a lot by name or include the destination the lot serves.

PARKING TRAILBLAZER:
Parking Trailblazer Signs can be mounted to existing lightpoles.



PARK.1_LEFT **PARK.2_LEFT** **PARK.3_LEFT**

PARK.1
Parking Directional

PARK.2
Parking Directional

PARK.3
Parking Directional

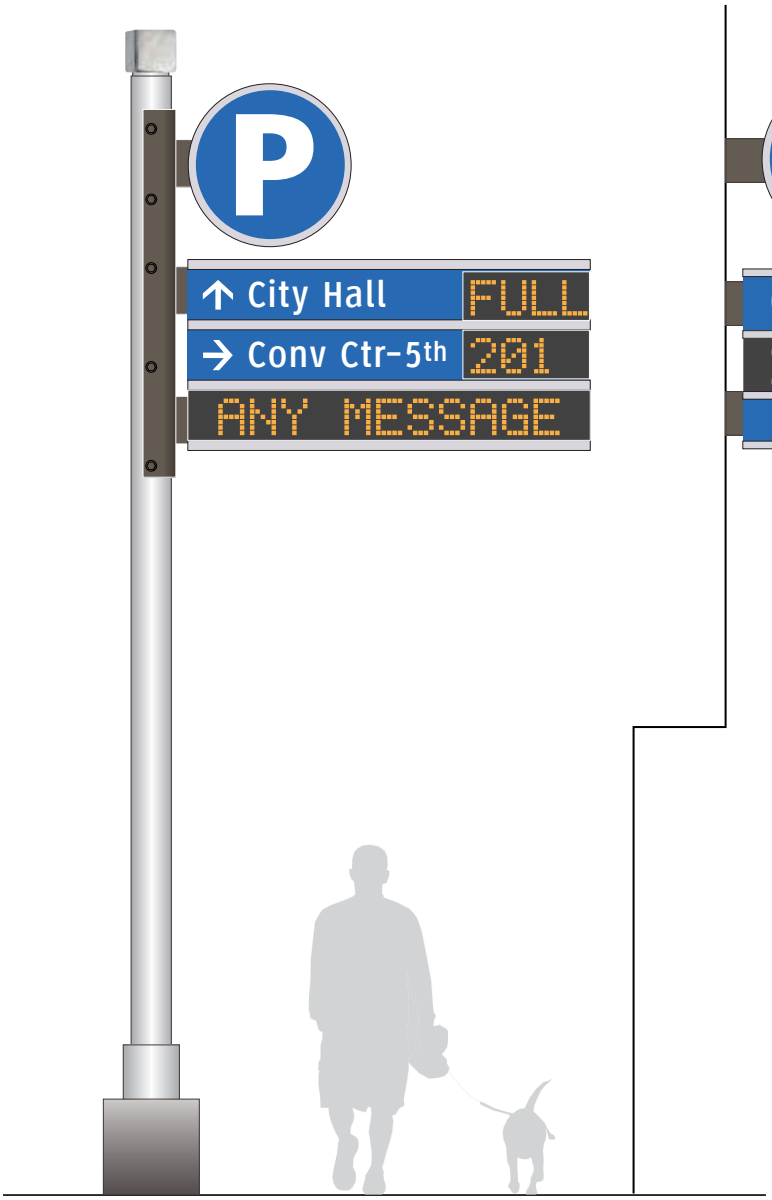
PARK.4
Parking Trailblazer

SIGN MENU:
PARKING

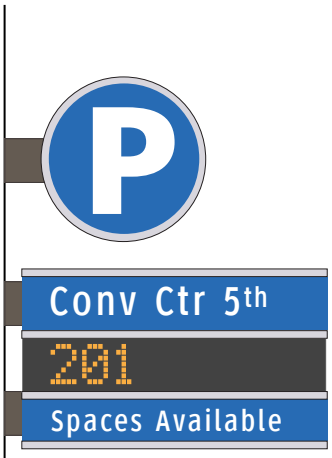
ELECTRONIC PARKING SIGNS:
Electronic Parking signs give real-time parking information. Electronic signs are available for both directional information as well as at garage entries.

These signs are illuminated and require power & controls to be located nearby.

GARAGE ENTRANCES:
Garage entrances are identified by a combination of wall mounted letters, and an entry structure with a garage identification panel attached to it.



PARK.5
Electronic Parking Directional



PARK.6
Garage Entry Directional

PARK.7
Garage Entry Wall Mounted Letters

PARK.8
Garage Entrance Structure + Panels

SIGN MENU:
PEDESTRIAN

A series of pedestrian sign types have been developed to address various situations and communicate a variety of information.

PEDESTRIAN DIRECTIONALS:
These sign types can be mounted to existing poles or on new poles and provides direction to up to 6 destinations.

In addition to the attraction name and direction, the sign should also indicate the amount of time it takes to walk to that destination. Text or pictograms can be used on the signs.

These signs can direct to typical destinations and attractions as well as paring garages and lots, and adjacent districts.

PEDESTRIAN MAPS:
In situations where orientation would assist a visitor, signs are available to display a map graphic. The "heads-up" map includes major landmarks and a 5 and 10 minute walk radius.

Signs can be mounted on existing posts or freestanding.

PDIR.3
Pedestrian Directional
Utility Pole Attachment
3 messages

PDIR.3A
Pedestrian Directional
NEW POST
3 messages

PDIR.6
Pedestrian Directional
Utility Pole
6 messages

PDIR.6A
Pedestrian Directional
NEW POST
6 messages

PMAP.1
Pedestrian Map
Single-Sided
Utility Pole Attachment

PMAP.2
Pedestrian Map
Double-Sided
2 Posts