

# Advisory Committee of Council Staff Report



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To Accessibility Advisory Committee  
Date Tuesday, August 20, 2024  
Subject **Finding Your Way: Walking, Cycling and Rolling**

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## Recommendation

1. That the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) receive the staff report for the project entitled 'Finding Your Way: Walking, Cycling and Rolling'.
  2. That the AAC provide recommendations regarding:
    - Sections of trails or cycling routes in Guelph that would benefit from better wayfinding
    - Destinations / places in Guelph that are important to include as information on new wayfinding signs
    - Features that are helpful for making wayfinding signs and tools accessible
    - Examples of wayfinding signs or other tools that you have seen in Guelph or other cities
    - Individuals/groups/organizations to engage
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## Executive Summary

### Purpose of Report

To inform the AAC about the Finding Your Way: Walking, Cycling and Rolling project.

To seek recommendations from the AAC in response to the discussion questions posed in this report.

### Key Findings

The goal of the "**Finding Your Way: Walking, Cycling and Rolling**" project is to design a user-friendly system of signs and other information tools that will enable people to easily find their way along Guelph's trails and cycling routes.

The City is at the start of the project and is seeking recommendations from the AAC that will help to inform the process and outcomes of the project.

In addition to formal engagement through this report, the City also invites AAC members to participate in the public engagement events and activities happening during summer and early fall 2024.

### Strategic Plan Alignment

This work aligns to 'City Building' strategic theme of the Strategic Plan 2024-2027 and will support the strategic objective to 'Make it easier to get around'.

## Financial Implications

The budget has been approved for this project.

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## Report

The goal of the “**Finding Your Way: Walking, Cycling and Rolling**” project is to design a user-friendly system of signs and other information tools that will enable people to easily find their way along Guelph's trails and cycling routes. The project will focus on existing trails and routes, and will not include designing or constructing any new trails or routes. The system of signs will be designed to meet the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements, including Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards (IAS) and the City of Guelph Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM)

Developing an effective 'wayfinding' system will help residents and visitors to plan their trips, estimate their travel time, and choose the best route for their needs. The project will also highlight the unique opportunities within Guelph to acknowledge and highlight our history, our destinations and our communities.

The need for the project has been identified by the community in several existing master plans: the [2013 Cycling Master Plan](#), the [2017 Active Transportation Network Study](#), the [2021 Guelph Trail Master Plan](#) and the [2022 Transportation Master Plan](#). It is a shared goal of all these plans to improve connectivity and accessibility throughout Guelph for all abilities and ages.

This project is the first focus within a city-wide wayfinding strategy to support the Strategic Plan 2024-2027 objective to build a well-connected city that is easy to get around.

### What is wayfinding?

Wayfinding refers to the information systems designed to guide people through a physical environment.

Wayfinding signs include various elements such as maps, symbols, colours, and digital interfaces that help users navigate through networks.

### Project team

The Finding Your Way: Walking, Cycling and Rolling project is a joint initiative between the Parks department and the Engineering & Transportation Services department. The City has engaged consultants Alta Planning + Design and Urban Minds to support the work.

### Timeline

The project is being implemented in three main phases of work:

#### Phase 1: April to July 2024 - Background and best practices

- Review of City Policies, Plans, and Guidelines
- Assessment of Examples from Other Cities/Towns
- Review of Existing Routes and Signs

## **Phase 2: May to December 2024 - Strategy Development**

- Route Identification
- Destination Highlighting
- Pilot Sign Placement
- Sign Types and Information

## **Phase 3: December 2024 to February 2025 - Reporting and Finalization**

- Project Documentation
- Implementation Guide
- Next Steps

Engagement for the project launched on July 8, 2024 and will continue through to the end of December 2024 (i.e. spanning Phases 1 and 2).

### **What does the project scope include?**

The project work will include:

- Reviewing existing conditions, including existing route identities and existing use of signs
- Selecting on and off-road active transportation routes where wayfinding could improve user experience
- Identifying the following features of a wayfinding sign system:
  - route identity
  - sign types and locations
  - type of information to be included on signs
  - destinations to highlight/reference
- Selecting a pilot route and developing a detailed sign plan
- Recommending phasing and timeline for implementation
- Recommending digital tools that could be used to enhance wayfinding

### **What is not part of the project?**

The project work will not be considering:

- Re-naming of trails that have existing commemorative names
- Interpretive/educational signs
- Wayfinding signs to or on privately owned lands
- Graphic design for signs – this will be determined through a separate future project
- Specifying language and wording for each and every sign identified as part of the system
- Fabrication and installation of signs – this will be completed as a future project once the strategy is adopted
- Purchasing or developing digital tools

### **Engagement**

The City is seeking recommendations from the Accessibility Advisory Committee that will help to inform the process and outcomes of the project. In addition to

formal engagement through this report, the City also invites AAC to participate in the public engagement events and activities happening during summer and early fall 2024.

The project formally launched in July with an [engagement page on Have your Say Guelph](#) which includes an [online survey](#). Staff will also be hosting a series of engagement activities held within various neighbourhoods with a range of interest holders and groups over the course of the summer months and into the early fall.

City staff invite AAC members to participate in these engagement activities. As the project progresses, City staff will keep the AAC updated on specific opportunities to engage.

The aim of the engagement work is to collect feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of existing signage and explore potential enhancements.

### **Engagement questions for advisory committee input**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee's input on this project is welcomed to support the City's goals of establishing a wayfinding system that is user friendly and is planned, designed, and communicated with people of all ages and abilities in mind.

The project team is seeking recommendations from the Accessibility Advisory Committee in response to the following engagement questions:

- 1) Are there any **sections of trails or cycling routes** in Guelph that you feel would benefit from better wayfinding?
- 2) What **destinations / places** in Guelph are important to include as information on new wayfinding signs?
- 3) What **features** are helpful for making wayfinding signs and tools accessible for people walking, biking, and rolling in Guelph?
- 4) Are there **examples** of wayfinding signs or other tools that you have seen in Guelph or other cities that you think we should consider?
- 5) What **individuals/groups/organizations** should we be engaging to establish a better understanding of community needs?

### **Financial Implications**

The budget has been approved for this project, which includes a grant from Infrastructure Canada's National Active Transportation Fund.

### **Consultations**

An Engagement Summary Report will be compiled and published by the end of December 2024.

### **Attachments**

Attachment-1\_Presentation\_Finding Your Way, Walking, Cycling and Rolling

## **Departmental Approval**

Jennifer Juste, Manager, Transportation Planning

## **Report Author**

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## **This report was approved by:**

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