CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

WAYFINDING PROGRAM

Design Presentation
Alexandria Planning Commission
Boards of Architectural Review

06 January 2009
The Project

What exactly is a "wayfinding system"?

A coordinated system of sign elements that serves to identify, direct and inform visitors and residents.
The Project

Example of various elements within a Wayfinding System
Why does Alexandria need a wayfinding system?
Project Objectives
Objectives

Function

Serve as a comprehensive vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle wayfinding system

Direct to and identify parking in Old Town

Provide trailblazing to and from regional roadways, transit hubs, bike trails and attractions

Promote walking, biking, mass transit

Incorporate regional trails and historic sites, including the Alexandria Heritage Trail

Develop a comprehensive strategy to improve wayfinding to visitor amenities such as shops, hotels, restaurants
Objectives

Character

Establish an overall identity compatible with the city's historic character

Highlight individual District identities as well

Reduce clutter, increase consistency
Objectives

Accessibility

Comply with ADA

Utilize best practices for enhanced accessibility
Objectives

Cost effective design and implementation
Changeable information on modular panels for easy updating
Straightforward, industry standard fabrication techniques
Shared components across multiple sign types
Standard, readily available materials & parts
Savvy phasing for maximum economic impact, production run pricing
Design Team Analysis
Address Pedestrian information needs

An informed pedestrian is comfortable, confident, and ready to explore.
Streamline Vehicular wayfinding

Focus on the essentials: get visitors quickly to parking so they can start enjoying Alexandria on foot.
Address visitor & community needs

Community destinations are many & far reaching; vehicular signs should account for both groups in a unified design standard.
Define/direct to districts past Old Town

Identifiable districts give visitors more to explore; plus they make wayfinding easier by creating "bite-size" sections of the city.
Stakeholder Input
City Working Group

Composed of representatives from

- Planning & Zoning
- Transportation and Environmental Services
- Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
- Office of Historic Alexandria
- General Services
- City Manager’s Office

Met regularly with design team to provide additional input
Stakeholder Advisory Group / Community

SAG composed of representatives from civic organizations, business associations, Alexandria Ped/Bike, National Park Service, ACVA, AEDP, Chamber of Commerce, WMATA, DASH and City commissions (Arts, ACPD, Aging and HARC)

- February - SAG Meeting
- April - SAG Meeting
- May - Community/SAG Meeting
- June - SAG/Community Collaborative Workshop
- September - SAG Meeting
- October - SAG and CWG online survey
- November - SAG Meeting
- December - SAG online survey
- January - Community Open House
... on districts:
Input ... on destinations:

**TIER A**  Destination of primary importance; direction throughout city via all access routes

**TIER B**  Major destination; advance strategic wayfinding provided

**TIER C**  Minor destination, or exclusively civic destination; wayfinding provided if "hard to find" (e.g. on a side street)

**TIER D**  Minor destination or exclusively civic destination; directional wayfinding not needed, but still may be identified on map or at site.
Input ... on destinations:

**TIER A**
- City Center
  Old Town Historic District

**TIER B**
- Courthouses & Municipal Buildings
  - Animal Shelter
  - City Court
  - City Hall
  - Court House Square
  - DMV
  - Health Department
  - Human Services
  - Lee Center
  - Office of Sheriff Detention Ctr
  - Police Department
  - Recycling Centers
  - Senior Services
  - U.S. Bankruptcy Court
  - U.S. District Court

**TIER C**
- Colleges / Universities
  - George Washington Grad School
  - Northern Virginia CC
  - Strayer University
  - Virginia Tech Architecture Center
  - Virginia Theological Seminary

**TIER D**
- Regional Commercial Centers
  - Landmark Mall
  - Potomac Yard

**Hospitals**
- Inova Alexandria Hospital

**Transit Stations**
- Amtrak/VRE
- Braddock Road Metro (DASH, Metro)
- Brandywine (DASH, Metro Bus)
- Eisenhower Ave Metro (DASH, Metro, REX)
- King & Washington (DASH, Metro Bus)
- King Street Metro (DASH, Metro, REX)
- Landmark Mall (DASH, Metro Bus, Fairfax Conn)
- Seminary Road & Kenmore Ave (DASH, Metro Bus)

**Parks, Pub.Squares & Rec Facilities**
- Cameron Run Regional Park
- Charles Houston Park
- Chinquapin Park
- City Marina
- Dangerfield Island National Park
- Fort Ward
- Ivy Hills Cemetery
- Jones Point National Park
- King Street Garden Park
- Lee Center
- Market Square
- Waterfront
- All Other Parks

**Theatre, Arts & Performing Arts**
- The Athenaeum
- The Birchmere
- Del Ray Artisans
- Little Theatre
- Metro Stage
- Schlesinger Center
- Torpedo Factory Art Center
Input ... on destinations:

**Museums / Historic Attractions**
- African American Heritage Park
- Alexandria Archaeology Museum
- Alexandria Black History Museum
- Alexandria National Cemetery
- Alexandria Visitor Center
- Archives and Records Center
- The Athenaeum
- Carlyle House
- Christ Church
- Contrabands and Freedmen’s Cemetery Memorial
- Fort Ward
- Freedom House
- Friendship Firehouse
- G.W. Masonic National Memorial
- Gadsby’s Tavern Museum
- Jones Point Lighthouse
- Lee-Fendall House
- The Lyceum
- Old Presbyterian Meeting House
- Seaport Foundation
- Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary
- Torpedo Factory
- U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Museum

**Regional Destinations**
- Mount Vernon Estate
- Reagan National Airport
- Washington DC

**Major Trails & Trail Access Points**
- Alexandria Heritage Trail
- Four Mile Run Trail
- Holmes Run Trail
- Mount Vernon Trail
- W & OD Trail

**Public Arts Sites**
- King/Fayette
- Canal Square

**Libraries**
- Barrett Library
- Beatley Library
- Burke Library
- Duncan Library

**Schools**
- Bishop Ireton
- Episcopal
- George Washington
- Hammond
- St. Stephens St. Agnes
- TC Williams High School
- All Other Schools
Input  ... on design:

1. A versatile design palette which can be applied throughout the city

2. Interchangeable elements to relate to specific districts (color/pattern/icon/etc)

3. Clear & legible text and arrows

4. Sophisticated, flexible color palette, yet not too "muddy”, with potential for selective pops of brighter color & contrast

5. Relief and patterning, using architectural inspiration which lends authenticity

6. An authentic, timeless look:

"Rich history with contemporary flair"
Design Character
Design Character | Design Toolkit - Form / Color / Style

Design Toolkit - Form / Color / Style

- Informative without being Generic
- Posts help define the identity of the program
- Select opportunities for retrofits
- Engaging silhouettes
- Colorful wayfinding murals
- Distinctive shape and palette
- 3D made 2D

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA WAYFINDING DESIGN
Design Character | Design Toolkit - Color Inspiration

Design Toolkit - Historic Color Inspiration

Design Toolkit - Bright Color Inspiration
Authenticity: Colonial sign precedents

Fig. 16. Schematic drawing of tavern sign construction, con.

Fig. 47. Sign for the Hannah Hotel, circa 1836, Bethlehem, Conn. CHR, cat. 47, side 2.
Design Character

Authenticity: The ship-in-port as a unique regional identifier

Left: Typical 18th century sailing vessel
Above: 1864 Bird's Eye view of Alexandria Waterfront
Design Solution
Design Character | Ship Emblem

Seal design for gateways

Sign “footer” reinforces character
Proposed sign types fall into six key categories:

1. Gateways (city & district)
2. Vehicular
3. Pedestrian
4. Bicycle
5. Destinations
6. Interpretive/Historic
1. Gateways

City Gateway
1. Gateways

City Gateway

Photo Montage - Metal Base / Banners
1. Gateways

City Gateway

Concept for Companion Banner Stanchions

These can be used in selected locations to extend the threshold experience and provide changeable display.
2. Vehicular

Vehicular Directionals
2. Vehicular

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Vehicular Directionals

- Friendship Firehouse
- The Lyceum
- Freedom House
- Carlyle
- National Cemetery
- King St

- Parker-Gray
  - Del Ray
  - Braddock Rd
- King St

- Barrett Library
Vehicular Directionals: District Headers

2. Vehicular

Designs to be reviewed with each district organization
2. Vehicular

Vehicular Directionals: District Headers

- **Old Town**: Friendship Firehouse, The Lyceum, Freedom House, Carlyle, National Cemetery, M King St
- **Parker-Gray**: Friendship Firehouse, The Lyceum, Freedom House, Carlyle, National Cemetery, M King St
- **Potomac Yard**: Friendship Firehouse, The Lyceum, Freedom House, Carlyle, National Cemetery, M King St
- **West End**: Friendship Firehouse, The Lyceum, Freedom House, Carlyle, National Cemetery, M King St

Designs to be reviewed with each district organization
2. Vehicular Public Parking: Directionals
2. Vehicular

Public Parking: Directionals
2. Vehicular Public Parking: Identification
2. Vehicular | Public Parking: Directionals

Enlarged Detail

![Public Parking Directional Signs](image)
King Street Zones - delineation and naming strategy

Public Parking: Directionals

- Metro District
- Core District
- Washington St District
- Market Square
- Waterfront
3. Pedestrian  
Pedestrian Wayfinding Components

- Transit Hub
- Public Parking
- King St. Trolley

Map and take-away

Street corner orientation

Finding all destinations

Pedestrian Wayfinding Components

- Map and take-away
- Street corner orientation
- Finding all destinations
3. Pedestrian

Visitor Information Kiosk
3. Pedestrian

Visitor Information Kiosk
3. Pedestrian

Visitor Information Kiosk

Detail

Conceptual Sketches - 3D study
3. Pedestrian

"Mini Kiosk"
Sign is a three-sided unit, with interchangeable panels for varied content.

Draft panel options shown from left to right:

1. primary "you are here" walking-radius map
2. attractions/shopping listing
3. overall district map
4. historical panel
3. Pedestrian

"Mini Kiosk" retail component

- **Primary Wayfinding Panel**
  - Information, Shops/Dining, etc indicated by icons
  - Attractions listed by name
  - Shops/Dining are indicated by an accent color
  - Walking-radius reinforces close proximity of destinations
  - Landmark buildings are drawn in 3D for ease of recognition

- **Additional Retail Panel**
  (under consideration)
3. Pedestrian

"Mini Kiosk" retail component

**PRIMARY WAYFINDING PANEL**

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**ADDITIONAL RETAIL PANEL** (under consideration)

- Highlights individual business on side streets
- Acts as reinforcement to centralized map kiosk, portable paper visitor guides
- Addresses A-frame clutter
- Requires a mini-kiosk at two opposite corners of every intersection to be applied equitably
- Requires significant administration and updating
- Could be funded by businesses who pay to be featured on sign
Located at confusing points of entry (King St. Metro, Water Taxi dock, etc) where it is helpful to “lead by the nose”
3. Pedestrian

Pedestrian "Pointer" Directionals

Carlyle
15 min walk

King Street
20 min walk to Waterfront

Old Town
2 min walk to King Street Iacon p22
20 min walk to King Street Metro

Waterfront

PD.1 Pedestrian Directional Pointer
4. Bicycles  Bicycle Wayfinding
4. Bicycles | Bicycle Wayfinding

- Bicycle trail markers indicating distances and directions:
  - Mount Vernon Trail
  - Four Mile Run
  - MILE 6.8

- Silhouette of a cyclist on a road.

City of Alexandria Wayfinding Design
5. Destinations | Destination ID: Community Services

Founders Park
499 SOUTH UNION ST
5. Destinations

Destination ID: Community Services
5. Destinations  Destination ID: Community Services

Alexandria Detention Center
2001 Mill Rd
Alexandria Sheriff's Office

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles
Customer Service Center
2681 Mill Rd

ALEXANDRIA WAYFINDING DESIGN

EST. 1749
Alexandria City Hall
301 King St
5. Destinations

Destination ID: Historical Sites

- Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary
  - Museum & Gift Shop
  - 105-107 S Fairfax St

- The Lyceum
  - Alexandria's History Museum
  - 201 S. Washington St
  - Est. 1839

- Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary
  - Museum & Gift Shop
  - 105-107 S Fairfax St
5. Destinations

Destination ID: Historical Sites

Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary

Museum & Gift Shop

HOURS
Wednesday-Saturday
11 am - 4 pm
Sunday
1 pm - 4 pm
Closed: Mondays and Holidays
New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas

HISTORY
Stabler’s first shop was at the corner of King and Fairfax Streets. He rented the current site, 107 S. Fairfax Street in 1796, and bought the property in 1805. By 1819, his oldest son William was working at the Apothecary Shop, and he eventually took over the business.
6. Interpretive

Alexandria Heritage Trail / Interpretive Program
6. Interpretive  Alexandria Heritage Trail / Interpretive Program

Detail: Wayside Exhibit Panel Studies (horizontal format)

Detail: Post-Mounted Exhibit Panel Studies (vertical format)

Detail: Ground-Plane Plaque or Trail Medallion
Neighborhood Identification Signs

- City will develop a palette of approaches and a baseline standard for size, location, text height, materials.

- These will serve as sample starting points for neighborhood groups to design their own solution.

- Individual signs would then be reviewed by the City for approval.

Comparable examples from Arlington County
Next Steps

January 27
City Council Worksession

February
Mockup testing

March-June
Finalize design, document guideline manual

Late-Summer/Early Fall
Possible Bid & Phase 1 Installation