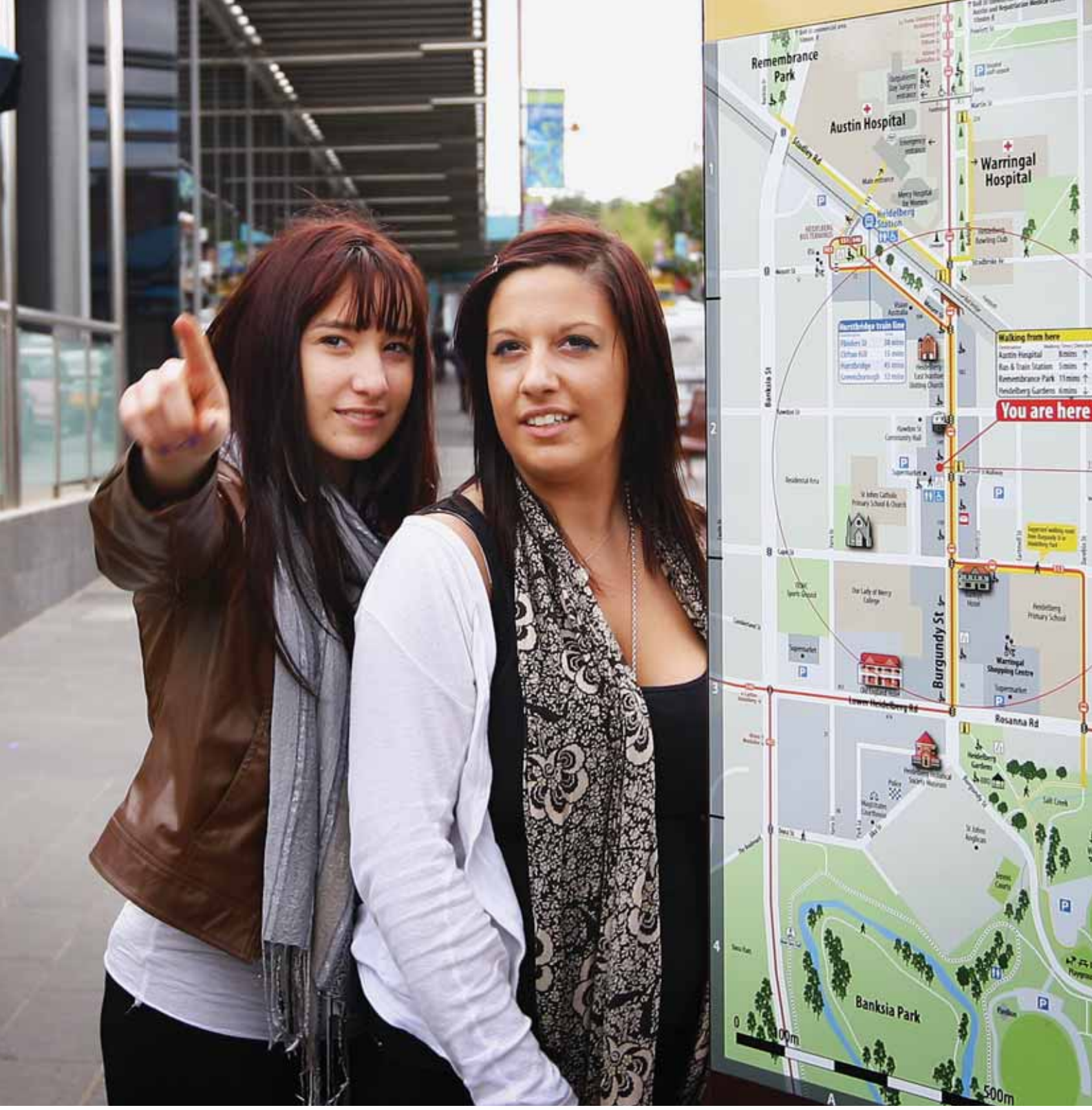

You are here:

a guide to developing pedestrian wayfinding

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State Government Victoria

Transport helps build, shape and connect communities. It affects the way they look, feel and function. Recognising this, the Department of Transport is committed to investments that provide an improved social, environmental and economic legacy for Victorians.

Understanding the requirements of users is an important part of this. Working with local communities across Victoria can deliver practical, tailored transport solutions that meet user and community needs while encouraging a sense of local ownership.

This wayfinding guide has been developed to assist local and state government to deliver better pedestrian signage. By supporting people to walk easily between locations, communities can become safer, healthier and more vibrant.

Authorised by the Victorian Government, 121 Exhibition St, Melbourne Victoria 3000.

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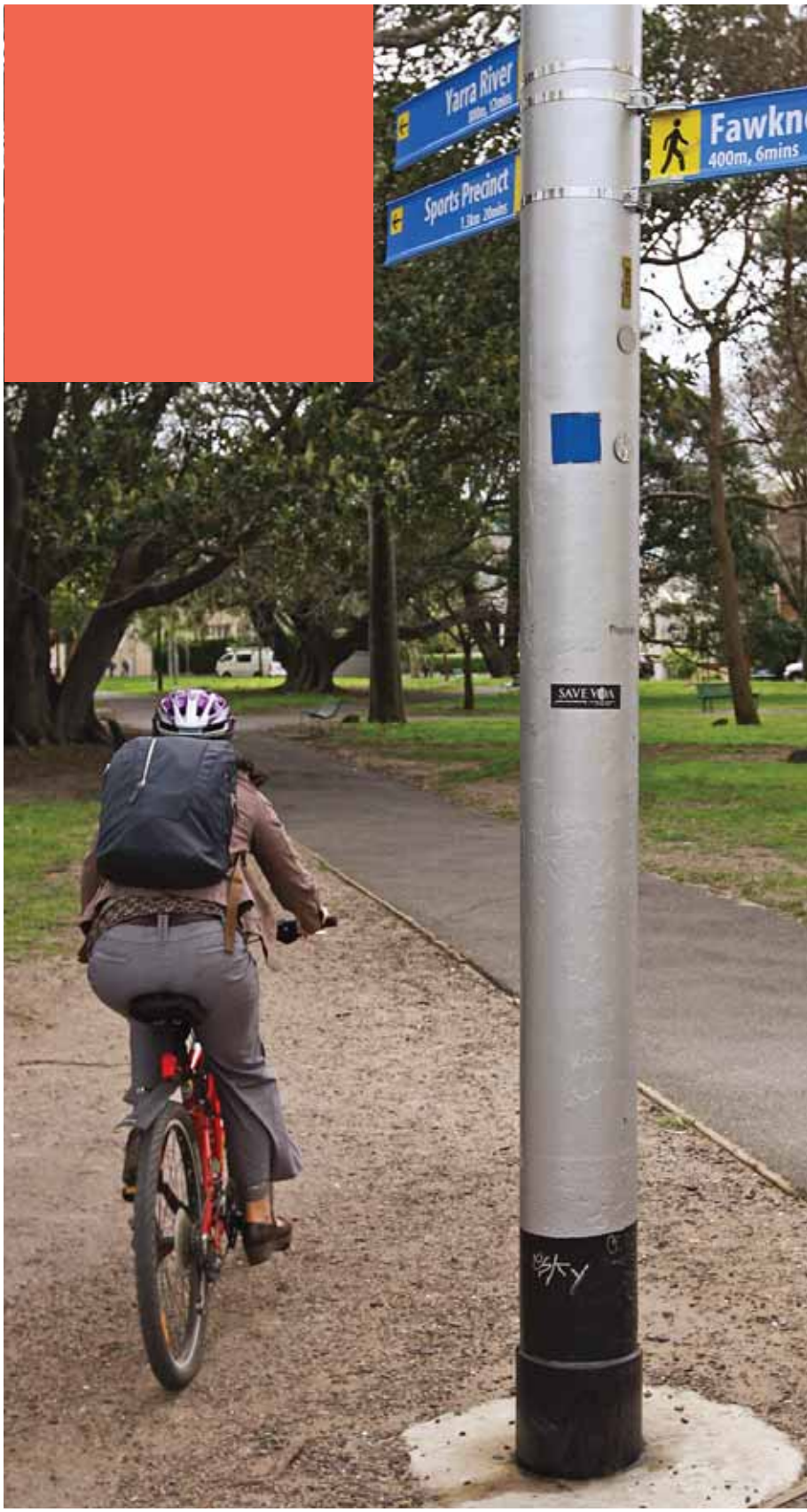
Contents

Overview

'Wayfinding' (finding one's way) describes how a person orientates themselves and navigates through an area or space. It is about knowing:

- where you are
- where you want to go to
- how you get there from where you are.



Wayfinding signs help pedestrians form a picture of an area. They link precincts or key landmarks in a logical way, improving a person's ability to walk easily and safely between locations. Developing and setting up a wayfinding system is a way for local governments to improve access for pedestrians living in, or visiting, an area.

Increasingly, people see the benefits of walking, both at a personal and a community level. Walking is an active form of travel with direct health benefits. It reduces traffic congestion and associated environmental impacts and encourages people to spend time in public spaces, making them safer and more vibrant. A network of wayfinding signs can bring a precinct to life by identifying sites of interest and increasing a sense of community and place.

As this guide shows, effective wayfinding is not simply a matter of putting a big map outside the local town hall and using a 'You Are Here' arrow to orient the passerby. Today, with the availability of the internet and GPS devices, user expectations about the quality of navigation information have increased and in-situ signage systems are becoming more sophisticated and user friendly.

Pedestrians' needs differ from other street users. They are often interested in the most direct and safe route to their destination. In particular they may want to know where:

- the best crossings are
- there are links to public transport
- local attractions and public facilities, such as toilets, are.

This guide is a non-prescriptive, go-to resource supporting councils' effective use of signage in their local area. It offers information, suggestions, and key considerations based on the Victorian Department of Transport's (DOT) experience in helping local government deliver wayfinding projects. The guide is divided into sections that support the planning, implementation and evaluation of wayfinding projects.

Wayfinding for cyclists

Wayfinding systems mainly target pedestrians, whose needs differ from cyclists. If you are designing a system for cyclists, tailor it to their needs–for example, they prefer not to stop, and they travel at faster speeds and in a different space to pedestrians.

'Finger-pointer' signs at street-sign level are easier for cyclists to read as they pass quickly, whereas complex information boards at street level are of little or no use. Distance to travel and the time it takes to reach a destination are likely to interest cyclists.

For guidance on the use of directional signage for off-road cycle paths or rail trails see *VicRoads Cycle Notes number 11*. Other useful references for signage for bicycles are the *Guide to Traffic Management – Part 10: Traffic Control and Communication Devices* (Austroads 2009e) and *AS 1742.9:2000* (Australian Standard).

While this wayfinding guide focuses on pedestrians, considering the needs of cyclists in route plans, sign types and sign locations can benefit them too, and at no extra cost.

Pedestrian approaches to travel

As a general rule, pedestrians like to be in control of their journeys and will look for guidance when travelling to a new destination. Most do their research before leaving home using resources such as the Melway, the internet or GPS devices.

Pedestrians use two broad navigation styles to get around. These can be referred to as macro-minded and micro-minded approaches[1].

Macro-minded approach

A macro-minded person sees the journey in its entirety. Their approach is to plot a route in relation to objects and places (landmarks). During the journey, they travel from one landmark to another and make directional decisions based on a 'mental map'.

Micro-minded approach

Micro-minded people travel towards their desired location and search for familiar landmarks or places that have significance for them, for reassurance that they are on the right track. A micro-minded person might remember the route as a series of visual signposts.

It's important to note that these two navigation styles are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they represent opposite ends of a spectrum, and pedestrians will use elements of both styles.

Figure 1A – Pedestrian approaches to travel
(Sweeney Research 2010)

Macro-minded

Detail required for empowerment and knowledge

- **Detailed maps**–detail provides assurance and confidence
- **Broader contextual maps**–help with bearings and future knowledge
- **Pictograms**–can be cross referenced with location, helps to establish when destination is reached
- **Street names** (including side streets)–signpost the journey and can help when planning an alternative route
- **Alternative pathways**–break the norm, provide a challenge
- **Public transport and landmarks**–can be used as a guide – confirmation and direction

⇔

Micro-minded

Prompting and continual guidance required for reassurance and security

- **Directional signage**–for regular prompting and confirmation
- **Major roads**, **landmarks and intersections clearly marked**–provide familiarity and reassurance that people are on the right track
- **Imagery** (not word-heavy maps, which can be daunting)–need to be clear and concise to communicate main points, detailed maps can be simplified using imagery
- **Local maps**–broader area maps provide too much detail and can detract from what wayfinders 'need to know'
- **Colours and legends**–allow for quick and easy interpretation

When you develop a wayfinding system you should cater to both the macro and micro mindset. For example a panel sign (a large, upright sign with a map) could include both a broad contextual map (macro) and a local map (micro) showing the journey-specific information.

It is also important to create signs that meet the needs of a range of people, who will vary in everything from age to mobility level.

1 Described by Sweeney Research, based on fieldwork observations and analysis of research findings.

Developing your wayfinding system

You can use this guide to help you plan, implement and evaluate your wayfinding project. Having a detailed plan gives you an idea of project costs before you begin. Similarly, having clear objectives at the outset will help with project evaluation. Maps and photos can help to communicate existing and anticipated pedestrian routes.

Need and purpose

If you are exploring wayfinding resources, such as this one, you probably have an idea of what you want from a wayfinding system. Before you start planning you need to clarify the project's purpose, scope, and delivery. Some useful questions to ask include:

- Are people having difficulty finding places?
- Is the project about marketing local attractions, facilities and commercial outlets?
- Who is the target market–are there a lot of visitors in the area?
- How much are you willing to spend?

Geographical area

We recommend that you document the geographic scope of the wayfinding area (for example a one-kilometre radius around an activity centre). This scope should include areas of interest, location of key community and commercial services and the most popular transport methods for bringing people to the precinct.

To begin with, collect maps, photos and information on the demographics and activity within the precinct, such as, employment types, schools, tourism and historic landmarks.

The project scope may be changed after the audit process, described next, is completed.

Example 1 Maribyrnong City Council – Geographical issues

Geographical area: Within one kilometer radius of Footscray Train Station.

Need and purpose: To make central Footscray easier to navigate for pedestrians.

Existing problems: While the area is well serviced by public transport, pedestrians had difficulty orienting themselves and finding their destinations after leaving the bus or tram.

There were no signs telling people about local services and facilities and how to avoid heavy traffic.

Audit

To develop an effective wayfinding system you should consider the needs of your community. You can gauge community needs through auditing and consultation. An audit examines existing commuting habits, transport links, places of interest and any physical infrastructure issues that pedestrians and cyclists in the project area face. The findings will inform the design and implementation of the wayfinding project.

Example 2 Maribyrnong City Council – Audit scope

An initial analysis looked at access and walking times between key destinations in the project area.

The audit also assessed which pedestrian routes were the most popular.

Photos and maps showed current and anticipated traffic movement.

An audit should identify:

- **Demographics.** Signage systems should be tailored to meet the needs of your key demographic. For example, communities with a permanent population of elderly people will have very different needs to a neighbouring community that attracts a lot of tourists, but has a small permanent population. You also need to consider the businesses in the area and the impact they have on transport links.
- **Areas of interest.** Identify schools, hospitals, shopping strips (including the location of main entrances in bigger shopping complexes) and tourist attractions, as well as the major origins and destinations (including large car parks), and the type of transport or route people take to reach them.
- **Walking distances to public transport.** Provide maps linking transport hubs with major activity centres (for example schools, universities and shopping strips).
- **Major walking, cycling and accessible routes** (formal and informal). Consider the condition and use of existing routes. Identify the areas where pedestrians, people with impaired mobility and cyclists might need help finding key destinations while avoiding obstacles (for example major intersections).
- **Potential journeys.** Identify alternative routes that are quicker, safer, or more scenic.
- **Local traffic and public transport pressures.** Identify impacts on pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Key crossing points over creeks, train lines and roads.**
- **Existing signage.** Review its location, condition and whether it needs to be upgraded or replaced.

Example 3
Maribyrnong City Council – Audit outcome

After the audit, Maribyrnong City Council recommended installing high-quality, map-based signage at key locations across Footscray.

These signs detailed the range of transport, business, leisure and recreational, cultural, education, civic and retail destinations in the area.

This helped residents and visitors find locations in the main activity centre, as well as key destinations around Footscray, such as Victoria University.

Consult with the current users and owners of the space

Community consultation should inform any wayfinding project. This process will show how people use the existing spaces and will be useful in planning and finalising the audit. Most councils have consultation protocols; however, wayfinding consultation should focus on:

- discussion with user groups, shop owners and staff
- intercept surveys of the general public
- speaking with other councils that have installed signage systems in their area
- identifying user groups or a particular demographic and asking them to do a walking tour of the proposed sign locations to get feedback.

Example 4
Moreland City Council – Community consultation

Moreland City Council asked their local bicycle user group to take a ride through a proposed route and give feedback on whether the suggested treatments were appropriate. This ensured the site met the needs of the intended users.

You should consider conflicting needs of different user groups when you design the wayfinding system. These groups can also identify issues and places of interest. Their first-hand experience of wayfinding can be invaluable.

You should also consult with landowners to identify any compliance issues with relevant legislation (for example the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, DDA) and to get their consent for works related to your project.

Example 5
The City of Port Phillip – Community consultation

The City of Port Phillip conducted intercept surveys at points of interest in their activity centre and consulted project partners and stakeholders to work out the best wayfinding solutions for its community.

As well as guiding how your project will be designed and implemented, the information gathered during auditing and consultation can provide a point of comparison for post-implementation evaluation. For better evaluation you should use the same data-gathering approaches at the post-implementation and audit stages, for example intercept interviews, focus groups and observational surveys.

Signage system design

You should design your wayfinding system based on the need and purpose, and information gleaned from auditing and community consultation. The system design covers the types of signs used, how they look, the information they provide and their location.

An effective and coherent signage system includes:

- **A distinct and consistent product range.** Pedestrians will look for consistency between signs from one point to the next on their journey. Using the same colour, shape and format reassures the user that they are going the right way.
- **Predictable and coherent placement.** If there are issues with the existing placement of signs, learn from these mistakes when plotting the placement of new signs. Find out when to use a particular type of sign, the best location for signs, and where you need to use repeated signage.
- **Appealing and accessible information design.** Choose clear signs that are visually appealing and easily accessible for people with impaired mobility or vision. Use the same conventions for naming, distance and time indicators.

The type of information you need to convey should dictate the type of sign you use. Similarly, place signs based on how you want them to function within the wayfinding system, for example, to help orientate a person arriving in an activity area, or to reassure a pedestrian that they are going the right way. Also, consider any site-specific factors affecting installation, for example the location of existing street furniture.

Information panel signs/totem signs

Panel or totem signs are large, upright signs with maps. There are three types of maps: conventional, 'heads-up' and 3D. Each have different orientation approaches as follows:

- in conventional maps north faces up
- heads-up maps orient the direction of the user as they read the map–in other words north does not always face up
- 3D maps can follow a conventional or heads-up orientation approach. As its name suggests, this type of map shows a three-dimensional representation of key buildings and landmarks.

User preference will dictate whether a conventional or heads-up approach to orientation is best, which is why it is important to consult the users.

Figure 2A
Information panel checklist

An information panel sign should:

- include large, detailed and comprehensive maps ☐
- be highly visual ☐
- be in several places ☐
- include local and broader maps ☐
- use consistent colour coding and symbols ☐
- include side streets ☐
- refer to other maps ☐
- include contact information ☐
- be at eye level ☐
- use clear text and symbols ☐
- include clear written directions and arrows ☐

Use large, detailed and comprehensive maps

To be effective, large maps need to stand out and be easy to read. Detailed maps can meet the needs of both micro-minded and macro-minded pedestrians if they include elements that suit both user groups. Although detail can sometimes be seen as daunting for the more micro-minded navigators, pedestrians of either navigation style can focus on particular elements of the map – whether its traffic lights or a train station – to help them along their journey.

Use highly visual maps

Maps with a lot of words can be complex and difficult to interpret. Graphics and pictures are more likely to meet pedestrian needs.

Imagery helps macro-minded pedestrians visualise their whole journey. Similarly, it allows micro-minded people to memorise a series or sequence of landmarks or vistas.

Place in several areas

It is difficult to predict which pedestrians might need help and at what point in their journey. That is why we recommend putting information panel signs in logical places where pedestrians might expect to find them, such as public transport hubs and busy intersections.

Include local and broader area maps

Having both broader and local maps helps with orientation and bearings and is particularly helpful for macro-minded pedestrians. Local maps benefit all pedestrians.

Use consistent colour coding and symbols

It is important to use consistent colours and icons, such as the 'walking man' or 'i' (for information) to link all maps in a system for easy recognition and to encourage ongoing use. This will also assist pedestrians who require visual aids, or whose first language is not English.

Include side streets

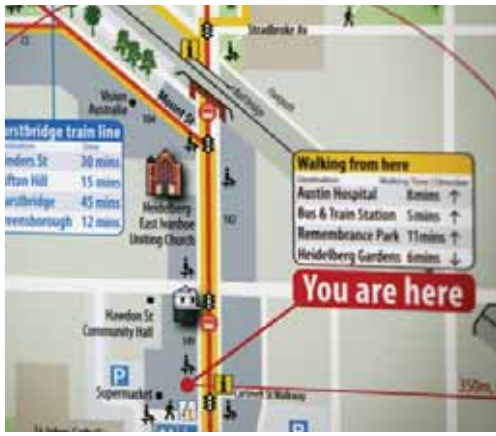
Most journeys are unique, beginning and ending in different places, and some will bypass main roads.

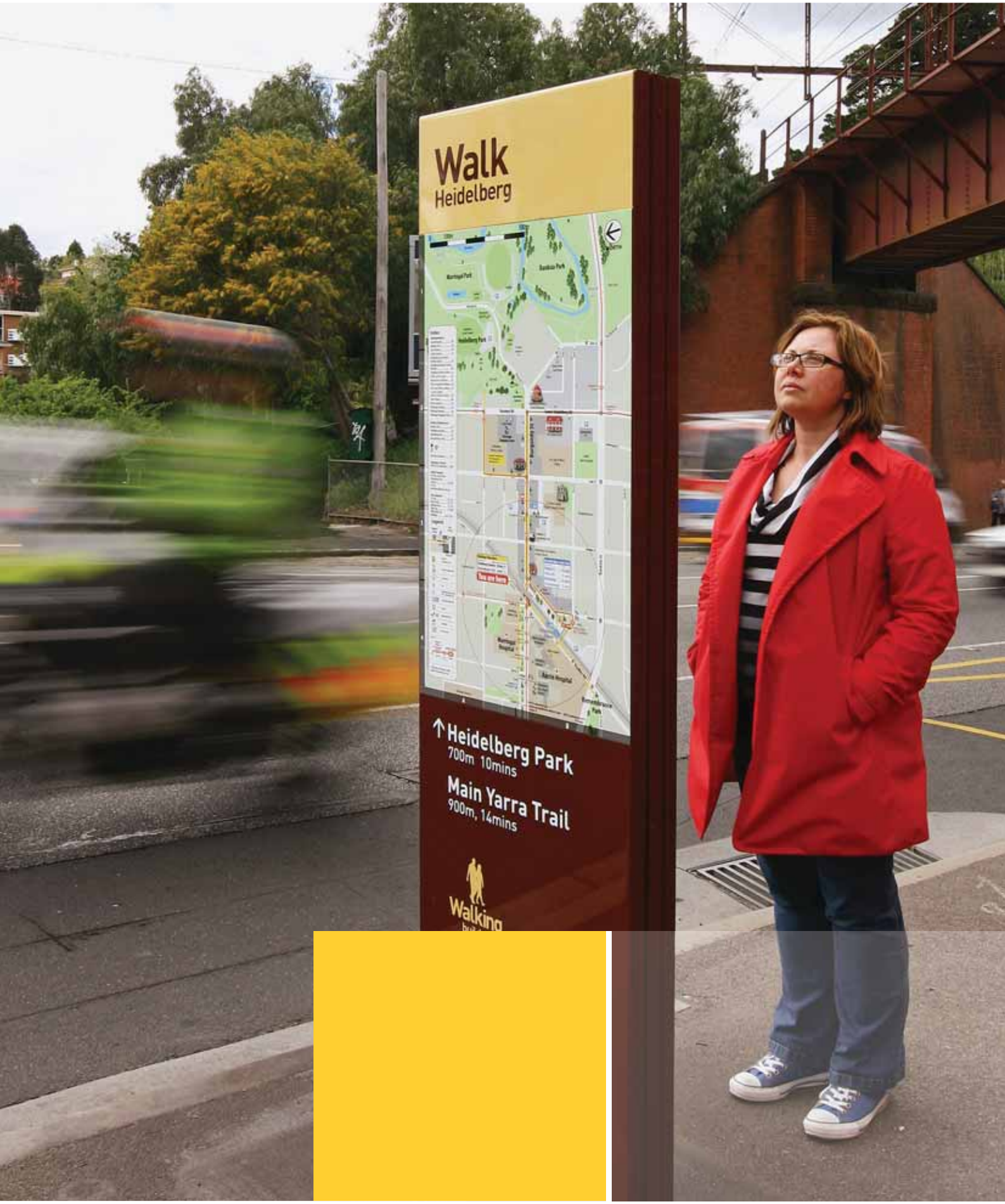
Maps should include side streets wherever possible to cater for those who travel away from the main roads.

Maps that include many different routes could encourage walking as an alternative to driving.

Refer to other maps

Alerting pedestrians to other maps and information panel signs can be particularly useful for micro-minded pedestrians who find it difficult to keep a 'mental map'. This will reassure them that there is continual guidance and prompts along the way.




Walk
Heidelberg
↑Heidelberg Park
700m 10mins
Main Yarra Trail
900m, 14mins
Walking

Include contact information

Providing contact information, such as a toll-free phone numbers for reporting damaged or inaccurate signage, is useful.

Be at eye level

Maps should be at eye level on the information panel sign for easy and quick reference.

Use clear text and symbols

Avoid words like 'precinct' and 'community hub', which can be easily misinterpreted.

Ensure that the 'You Are Here' symbol is highlighted because it is the first symbol pedestrians look for to orient themselves.

Where possible, include a simple legend (with large text at eye level), highlighting the most commonly used symbols, such as public transport symbols.

Use universally recognised symbols that the local community and visitors will understand, rather than site specific ones, such as logos.

Include clear written directions and arrows

Highlight the directions (arrows), minutes and meters to major landmarks and points of reference.

Ensure directions are accurate and large enough to be read from a distance. Consider using directional finger-pointer signs to reinforce the direction, time and distance to destinations.

Pedestrians may not need to continually consult the map if these directions and arrows are clear and relevant to their journey.

Directional (finger-pointer) signs

These are narrow, pointer-style signs that indicate the direction of the major destination and sometimes include walking time. Several destinations can be clustered on one sign post. Directional signs are less expensive and are very effective in combination with larger more detailed maps. Directional signs are useful for cyclists and pedestrians.

Figure 2B
Directional finger-pointer sign checklist

A directional sign should:

- be placed in high-traffic areas ☐
- use consistent symbols and colour coding ☐
- be distinguishable from traffic-focused signage ☐
- use large text ☐
- only include information on major landmarks ☐

Place in high-traffic areas

Directional signs are quick and easy to interpret. As their name suggests, they provide directions, regular prompting and confirmation. So it is important to install them at major intersections and other frequently visited areas between information panels.

Use consistent symbols and colour coding

Typically, pedestrians are searching for a particular destination, such as a library.

Keep colours and symbols consistent for a particular location across the entire system so pedestrians can find what they are looking for quickly and easily throughout their journey.

Be distinguishable from traffic-focused signage

Decisions about the height and visibility of directional signs are important because:

- they could blend in with other traffic and street signs of a similar height and appearance
- they have to compete with other signs, so it is preferable to use bold colour coding and place at a distance from other signage.

Use large text

Readers should be able to see the information they need from a distance for quick and easy interpretation.

Only include information on major landmarks

To reduce the number of finger-pointer signs, only include directions to major landmarks and points of interest. Using too many signs can confuse and put some pedestrians off. Ensure the signs point in the right direction and are not obscured by other signs.

Other sign types to consider

Trail-marker signs

These signs should reassure the pedestrian that they are on the right track. When they are incorporated with other directional signage, they provide a sense of 'connection' to journey origin maps. You can put up trail marker signs for temporary events or for detour routes.

Identification signs

These signs show when a pedestrian has arrived at a particular precinct or destination. Identification signs should use the same colour and text as the directional signs.

Street signs

Street names should be clearly marked on signs that are at a suitable height for pedestrians. As the main navigation tool, if street signs are hard to find there is little value in adding another layer of wayfinding.

Placement

Placement refers to:

- the location of signs based on their purpose in the wayfinding system–chosen through identifying trip origin/destination points, decision-making points and sightlines
- the orientation and position of signs based on the conditions at each site (for example, path width, lighting, location of street furniture and so on,) and the way pedestrians will approach them.

Ease of use

Pedestrians expect to see signs in busy areas with a lot of foot traffic, such as major intersections or near local attractions. Such placements often attract the attention of people passing by. Remember not all pedestrians take the same route so choose a central location.

People using a signage system expect signs to follow a logical order. For example, if information panels appear on the left-hand side of the road in one area, for ease of access, pedestrians will expect to see subsequent signs on the left.

Although signage needs to be located in central and often busy places, it should not disrupt the flow of foot traffic. Position signs in such a way as to allow pedestrians time and space to read and interpret them and to reduce the potential for conflict in a pedestrian thoroughfare. Putting signs on curb build outs with seating is one way to avoid footpath congestion.

Position signs so that they do not interfere with the accessible paths of travel and for people with limited mobility (such as people in wheelchairs).

Place information panels at right angles to the main roads (rather than on an angle) so pedestrians can easily orientate themselves when interpreting the maps and arrows.

Tip 1: Australian standards for signage

Under the *Australian Standard 1742.2, 2009*, the minimum vertical clearance for a sign that overhangs a foot or bicycle path is 2.5 metres. As a guide, a lateral clearance of 1.0 metre (minimum) is sufficient in most high-use pedestrian or cyclist areas. The lateral clearance is the distance between the sign and the edge of the through route, rather than the whole of path width.

Lighting

Before setting up signage think about whether it will operate all hours of the day and night. If you want it to be visible at night think about lighting options, such as putting your sign near an existing light source, setting a new one up or incorporating lighting into the sign design.

Visibility

Street sign height draws the attention of the pedestrian as street signs are a familiar navigation aid. It also increases visibility in high-density pedestrian areas.

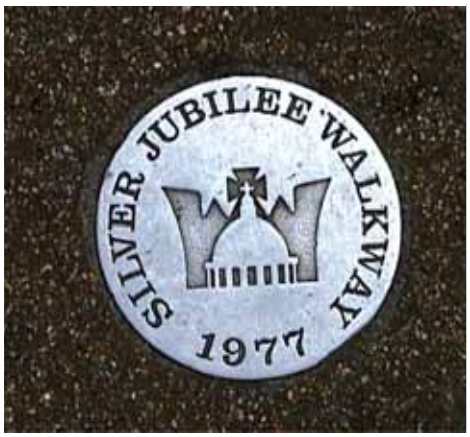
Other considerations

Make sure the footings or fastenings design is structurally sound and secure. Consider whether you need lighting, and if so make sure there is access to electricity. New signage should also fit in with other street furniture.

Think about placement before you finalise the design because it will dictate the best size and most suitable graphics.

Tip 2: Request a full-size mock up

To get a proper idea of what the sign will look like, its user friendliness for pedestrians and cyclists (who will access it at different heights) and its effect in the chosen location, think about getting a full-sized mock up made.



Materials

You can use a range of materials for wayfinding signage. First you should consider:

- **durability** in various weather and pollution conditions
- **vandalism** – some materials may be more resistant to vandalism (for example scratching and smashing) or easier and less expensive to repair or replace
- **material availability**
- **installation and maintenance issues** – find out whether the sign manufacturer can put the sign up or whether you need a contractor, because the manufacturer will know about sign assembly, whereas a separate contractor might not
- **whether the signs are made in Victoria** – there may be environmental and financial costs associated with transporting the signs to your area
- **cost** – investigate whether there are cost benefits in larger orders and consider the long-term benefits of a graffiti/scratch resistant surface
- **maps and information often need regular updating.**

Structural and design requirements will influence material choices, particularly the design method you choose for any map-based signs. There are three principal methods:

- cabinet-style signs with printed graphics inside
- digital print graphics adhered to metal panel signs which are sealed
- vitreous enamel metal panel signs.

Each method has advantages and disadvantages. Prices and maintenance requirements also vary.

Digital printing encased in smash-resistant polycarbonate screen (such as cabinet-style signs)

Advantages

- can be backlit and is effective in urban areas where many pedestrians use the signs at night
- maps are easily replaced, if or when information needs updating.

Disadvantages

- can be more expensive
- graffiti or scratching can deface the surface, making the sign illegible.

Aluminium panels with vinyl graphics and steel structural framing

Advantages

- can be updated by re-printing graphics
- cost effective
- low maintenance.

Disadvantages

- less damage resistant than other options
- needs separate lighting for night-time viewing.

Vitreous enamel panels on a steel frame

Advantages

- costs less than the cabinet-protected signs but more than aluminium panels
- hard-wearing and graffiti-resistant
- suitable for any colour.

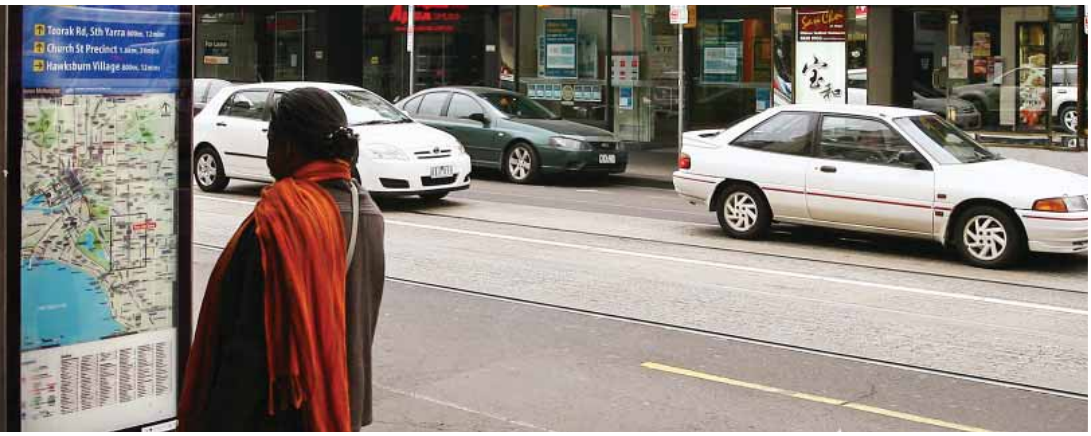
Disadvantages

- difficult to change
- separate lighting is needed for night viewing because the solid panel signs cannot be backlit.

Specialist signage producers can advise you on the most appropriate sign for a specific job and budget.

When you have designed your signage system, we recommend documenting design installation and maintenance details. This information can be used by your council for future wayfinding projects, and can include:

- **details of the sign family** – sizes, finishes and branding
- **supporting design details** – look and feel, layout, branding, and so on
- **a content guide** – describing the details for each sign in the system
- **a legibility guide** – setting out graphic standards and DDA compliance, as well as identifying what pedestrians need from wayfinding signage



- **a placement policy** – detailing the logic/method of signage locations and positioning
- **a maintenance guide** – outlining who will take responsibility for maintaining the signs (such as the asset management team), a cleaning schedule, repairs and updating program, recommended cleaning materials, and cleaning products to avoid
- **references to other signage policies** (such as Metlink or street signage standards) and your organisation's corporate branding material
- **health and safety issues.**

Wayfinding consultants

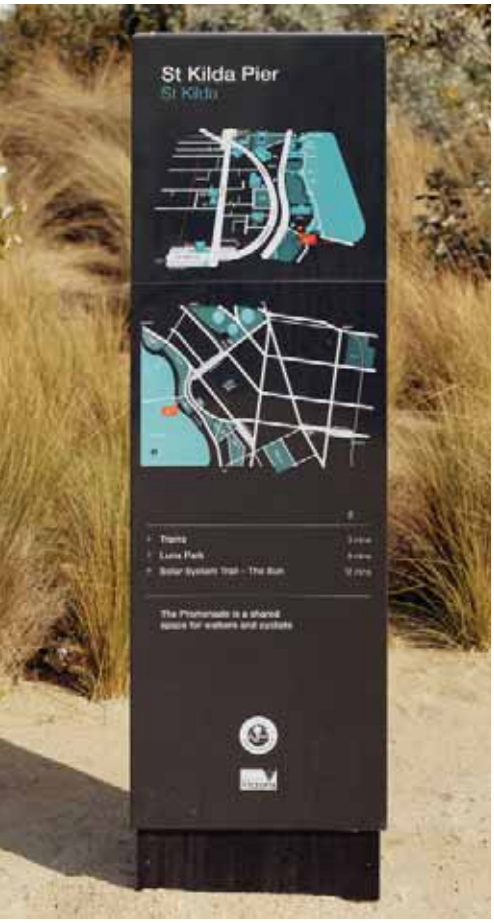
There are several consultants with experience in design, strategy and implementation of wayfinding signage. A good consultant can identify signage points, develop design and give advice about materials and maintenance issues.

Example 6
Maribyrnong City Council – Expert advice

The council consulted *Access Audits Australia* to maximise the 'access-for-all' approach across the project and to make sure the signs were internationally recognised and met DDA requirements.

Example 7
City of Geelong – Expert advice

The council wanted to use far-reaching signage aimed at cyclists. It used two consultants – one identified the best route, the other developed the signage. This approach worked well because the route selection consultant also identified barriers to cycling amenity that council could address.



Post-implementation evaluation

Ongoing evaluation is the best way of gauging the effectiveness of your signage system. This process shows whether you need to update your system design and installation specifications for current and future projects. There are many approaches to evaluation, including:

- **Intercept surveys –** in key areas or route points featuring the signage, particularly around train stations and other public services. Interviews provide background information (about age, gender, home postcode, reason for walking and so on) and community feedback about the effectiveness of the new signage.
- **Observational surveys –** should be done in the same locations. Observational surveys provide information about how the community uses wayfinding, and can include user demographics and observations about people's responses to the signage.
- **Focus groups –** show how important and valued the signage is as a wayfinding tool in an area. Sessions may target particular user or cultural groups.

As mentioned earlier in this guide, pre- and post-implementation information gathering processes should be similar for easy result comparison and to assess the overall effectiveness of your wayfinding system against your objectives.

Appendix A: Wayfinding in Victoria – an evaluation

In 2006 the Victorian Department of Transport (DOT) ran a four-year grant program called the *Local Area Access Program* (LAAP). The program's aim was to support local council improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure through small-scale infrastructure projects.

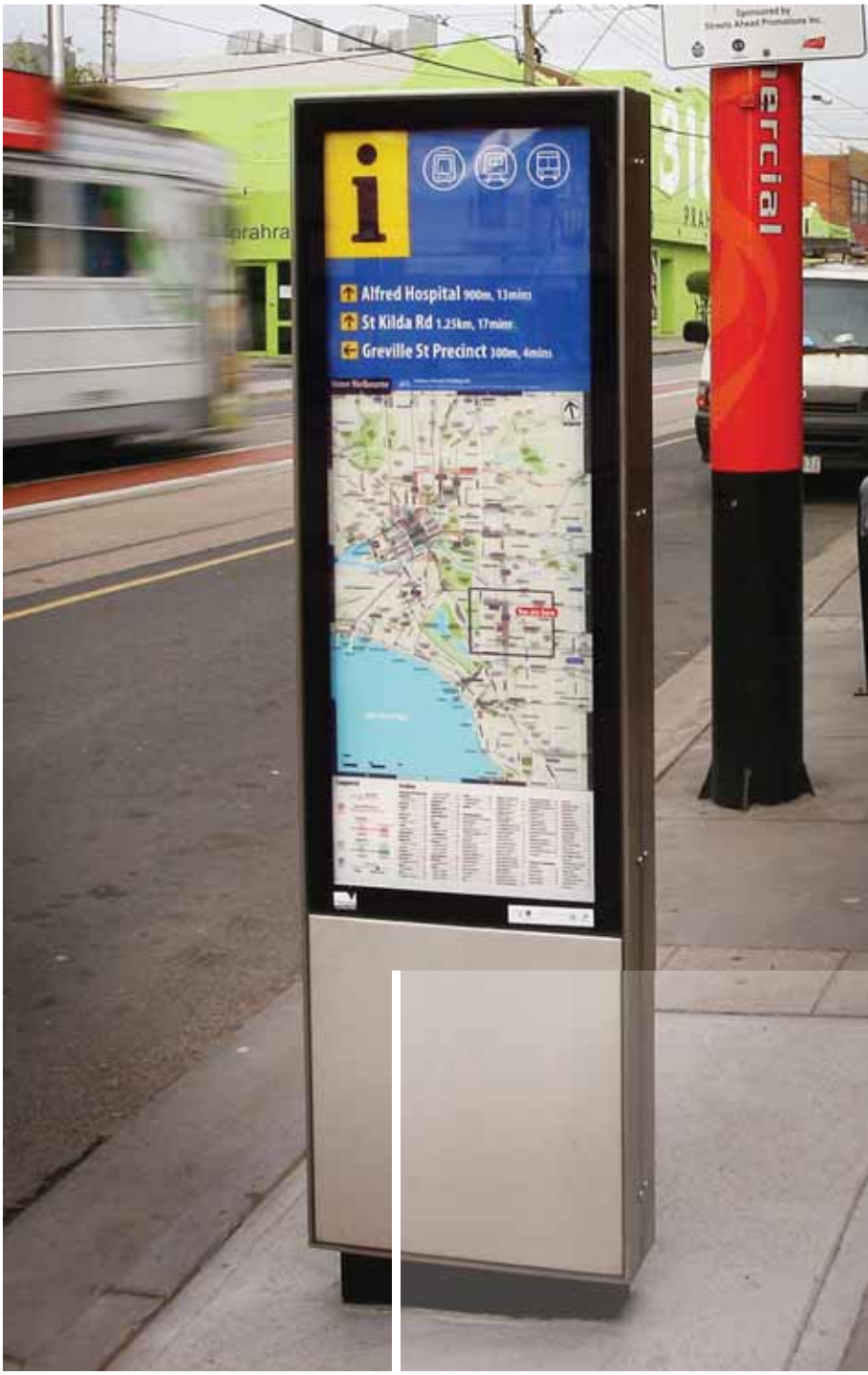
Under this program DOT helped set up 10 wayfinding projects with 12 local councils[2]. These projects were designed to help locals and tourists to orient themselves in these environments, to find their desired location and to find the best walking route to take to get there.

LAAP funding helped these councils identify and set up the best wayfinding system for their operating and physical environments. As a result, each of the wayfinding systems is slightly different.

In 2010 Sweeney Research did qualitative evaluations on seven of the wayfinding systems that DOT supported. These evaluations showed how effective each system was and highlighted the most important issues and considerations for designing effective signage. This information was used to develop *You are here: a guide to developing pedestrian wayfinding*.

The evaluation involved a series of (researcher) accompanied walks and follow-on walks (walks finished by respondents in their own time). Every accompanied walk included at least one local/resident and one visitor/ tourist in each area. This first-hand experience from users provided insight into how people interacted with the environment and highlighted possible improvements that could be made.

2 Banyule City Council, City of Darebin, City of Greater Geelong, Hobsons Bay City Council, City of Kingston, City of Melbourne, City of Port Phillip, City of Stonnington, City of Yarra, Maribyrnong City Council, City of Moreland, City of Whitehorse



Appendix B: Case studies

Local Area Access Program (LAAP) case studies

LAAP City of Port Phillip

St Kilda Region Wayfinding

Started: December 2006

Finished: June 2009

Purpose

The aim of the City of Port Phillip's Walk Strategy was to get more people walking more often. The plan focused on increasing and improving walking connections and making walking more attractive. The council recognised that directional or wayfinding pedestrian signs encourage people to walk more when they travel to work, access local shops and services, or during leisure activities.

The objective of the St Kilda Region Wayfinding project was to use signage to update and inform residents about the planned changes to the St Kilda Foreshore. The project also addressed community concerns about 'walkability' and other wayfinding issues in the region, including visitor/tourist information, directional signage and pedestrian information.

Project area

The St Kilda Foreshore precinct includes Fitzroy Street, Barkly Street and Acland Street.

Audit and consultation

The audit gave council a snapshot of existing and outdated signage. It also included observations and surveys at key locations, as well as pedestrian and cycle counts along signed routes.

Consultation included:

- intercept surveys at key sites within the activity centre
- initial consultation with project partners and stakeholders.

Signage system design

The council based its sign placement on:

1) the planned increase of pedestrians between:

- St Kilda Junction and the foreshore
- Balaclava Station and the foreshore
- Acland Street (Fitzroy Street to Carlisle Street)
- foreshore to Acland, Fitzroy and Carlisle Streets' activity centres.

2) increased location and route awareness at:

- St Kilda Botanical Gardens
- Grey Street to the foreshore (accessibility)
- Acland Street to the foreshore (accessibility)
- Lanes and one-way streets across St Kilda hill
- foreshore to Acland, Fitzroy and Carlisle Streets' activity centres.

Materials

The signs are made of vitreous enamel panels on a steel frame.

Project outputs

The council installed 18 wayfinding signs in and around the St Kilda Foreshore area. It based the wayfinding maps on a general map of the area, using information in its geographic information system to highlight features, locations and major areas within the precinct. Through consultation with project partners and stakeholders it was refined to include information about how to access business, tourist attractions and transport information.

LAAP City of Banyule

Heidelberg Sustainable Community Hub

Started: May 2008

Finished: December 2009

Purpose

Banyule City Council finished major works along Burgundy Street – the main retail and community centre in Heidelberg. Through this project, the council wanted to create a fully integrated, sustainable and accessible community hub in Heidelberg's main activity centre, as well as encouraging more people to walk, cycle and use public transport to get to and from the centre. Wayfinding signage was one of many streetscape improvements council used to integrate transport for local, recreational and commuter trips.

Project area

The council installed signs around the suburb of Heidelberg aimed at encouraging pedestrians to walk to Burgundy Street.

Audit

The audit highlighted all the major existing and future 'origins' and 'destinations', as well as key streets and pedestrian walking routes in the signage area. The audit also featured photographs of the area's existing pedestrian signage, identified locations where the council needed different types of wayfinding signs and places with 'walkability' issues.

The audit revealed that many elderly people live in the Heidelberg area and that there was an increasing trend towards the use of train and bus services.

Signage system design

The audit highlighted a number of lanes and pedestrian links, or shortcuts that a well-designed signage system could capture. Designing a well-scaled map with enough detail identified these links, making walking easier and quicker.

The council wanted to design a wayfinding system that was 'legible', low cost and used the fewest signs to achieve its purpose.

Materials

The panels are aluminium and the frames made of steel.

Project outputs

The council installed six information panel signs in and around Heidelberg's major activity centre. The signs were painted in the council's local colours–burgundy and cream–to create a 'local' feel. Seven directional signs with key destinations, including 'Burgundy Street Shops', 'Hospitals' and 'Train Station' were also put up around Burgundy Street. Each sign included the estimated walking time to the destination. Footpaths in the area also feature stencils promoting walking.

LAAP City of Melbourne, City of Port Phillip, City of Yarra and City of Stonnington

Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) Regionally Coordinated Signage Project

Started: December 2006

Finished: August 2009

Purpose

The purpose of IMAP Regionally Coordinated Signage project was to:

- enhance the walking environment in inner Melbourne through the promotion and development of a regional pedestrian network
- provide well-located and informative signs across the area, promoting walking as both a primary and secondary mode of 'transport' (as well as its recreational and health benefits)
- provide links between significant inner-regional places to encourage the use of environmentally sustainable transport.

Project area

The study area for this project focused on Richmond and South Yarra and covered four activity precincts, three recreation precincts and a number of walking links that can be used to move between these areas.

Audit

The IMAP councils commissioned an audit of the whole area. The audit showed that there is great diversity in how people travel along the pedestrian, cycling or public transport routes in the area. A signage-planning schedule was developed to assess the need for signs at various locations, taking note of site-specific information (such as tram stop numbers and the proximity to existing lighting). These site-specific details informed the new signage strategy.

The detailed audit of the area identified the best locations for the different signs. It also highlighted the practical difficulties of strictly following the general sign location principles identified in the research process.

Signage system design

The IMAP Regional Coordinated Signage Project introduced a consistent and informative pedestrian, cycling and public transport signage system design across the inner Melbourne region that includes estimated walking times and links to public transport.

The final design is clear, legible and accessible for all users. Situated at key locations, the signs direct people to major destinations and attractions in the area (such as activity centres, the central business district, recreational and entertainment facilities, parks and open spaces, the bay and Albert Park Lake, among others).

Materials

Map-based information panels–digital printing encased in smash-resistant polycarbonate screen ('cabinet style'); pole-mounted metal directional signs and route markers.

Project Outputs

22 map-based heads-up information panels, 21 directional signs and 11 route marker signs form the informative signage strategy across the IMAP region to encourage a pedestrian-friendly environment.

LAAP Maribyrnong City Council

Footscray Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements

Started: June 2007

Finished: August 2008

Purpose

The main aim of this project was to improve navigation around central Footscray. While the area is well serviced by public transport, people often find it hard to orientate themselves, or to find their destination after exiting the bus or train. As Gael Reid, the Sustainable Transport Officer at Maribyrnong City Council says, 'Footscray seems so much more complicated than it really is'.

Previously there was no signage telling people about access to local services and facilities, or how to avoid the heavy vehicle and truck traffic that runs through the city centre.

The project's other objectives were to improve people's perceptions of safety, highlight Footscray's precincts, promote the area's facilities and encourage people to think of them as 'walkable' destinations.

Project area

The council decided to focus on an area within one-kilometre of Footscray train station, which includes several major destinations and precincts. The area has a mix of older people, new residents and people from low socio-economic backgrounds, who largely rely on public transport to get around.

The Footscray activity centre covers central Footscray through to the Maribyrnong River in the east, the Victoria University campus and Footscray Park to the north, Geelong Road to the west and Charles Street/Lyons Street to the south. This area is rich in civic, recreational, residential, educational, transport, arts and cultural precincts. Destinations are within five to fifteen minutes walk away from the Footscray Train Station, with a maximum of thirty minutes needed to reach the outlying precincts across the area. This spread gives pedestrians a range of different routes and distances to choose from.

Audit

An initial analysis looked at access and walking times between key destinations within the project area. Pedestrian walkways were divided into primary and secondary routes. The council used photos and maps to understand existing and anticipated traffic flows.

Signage system design

A comprehensive signage strategy detailed the best signs to use and where to put them. The Footscray Wayfinding Signage Strategy recommended installing high-quality, colourful wayfinding signs and heads-up maps, which were based on the highly regarded Bristol Legible City system.

Materials

The signage is made from vitreous enamel and includes on-street information panels, directional finger-pointer signs (which can be attached to the panels or used independently), street signs, pedestrian maps and tactile signs.

Project outputs

The council set up 17 wayfinding signs (11 with double-sided maps) at key locations in Footscray that detailed the range of transport, business, recreation, education and cultural activities in the area.

Appendix C: Useful references and further information

1. Bristol City Council, Bristol Legible City project 1996 (UK), website: www.bristollegiblecity.com
1. Grant, J Dr & Herbes B 2007, *Best Practice in Pedestrian Wayfinding Within Urban Areas*
2. Lynch, Kevin A 1960, *The Image of the City*, MIT Press, Cambridge MA
3. Sweeney Research 2010, *Department of Transport: Wayfinding Signage Systems*

Further information

Principal Pedestrian Networks

DOT developed the Principal Pedestrian Networks (PPN) to improve the planning for pedestrian access across Victorian activity centres. The tool was designed to help councils improve pedestrian planning as part of the VicRoads SmartRoads initiative. It helps councils map areas of expected high demand, and provides guidance on doing audit or gap analysis to build the necessary infrastructure to deliver a PPN.

LAAP wayfinding partnership projects

The 10 LAAP wayfinding projects show the diversity of signage systems, the type of signs used, the material they are made from and where they are located. These are summarised below.

Banyule City Council: Heidelberg Sustainable Community Hub

- map-based information panels and directional signs
- vinyl on aluminium panel.

City of Darebin: La Trobe University to Macleod Station Walking and Cycling Link

- map-based information panels
- vitreous enamel in two sections for easy replacement.

City of Greater Geelong: Linking Geelong's Cycle Network

- directional signs, finger boards.

City of Hobsons Bay: Sciencewalk to Scienceworks

- sculptures as vertical trail markers and directional signs.

City of Kingston: Finding Your Way

- map-based, cabinet-style information panels and directional signs.

Cities of Melbourne, Port Phillip, Stonnington and Yarra – Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP): Regionally Coordinated Signage Project

- map-based, heads-up information panels and directional signs.

Maribyrnong City Council: Footscray Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements

- information panels, directional finger signs
- vitreous, enamel.

City of Moreland: Coburg Wayfinding Strategy

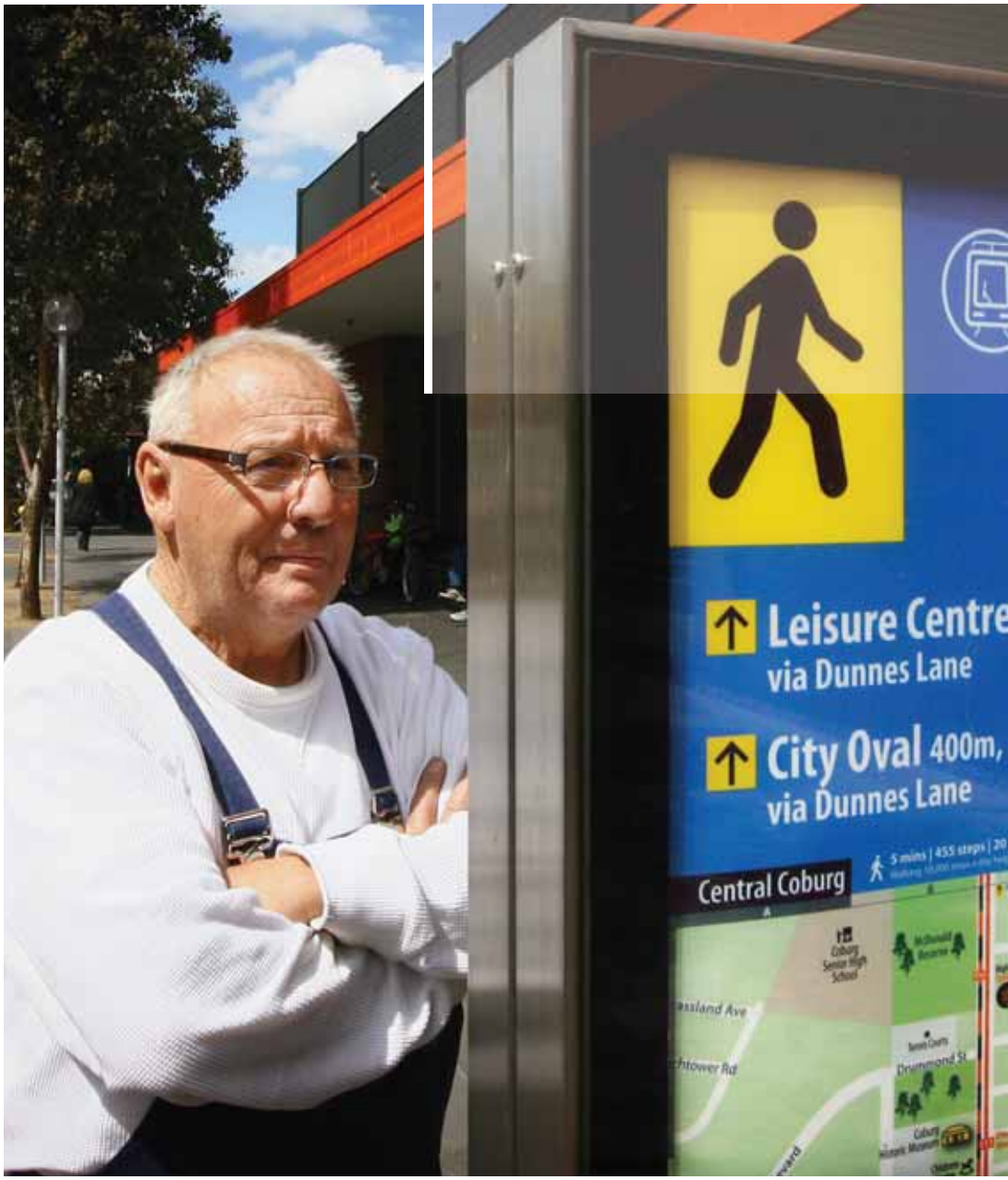
- map-based, cabinet-style information panels
- LED backlit.

City of Port Phillip: St Kilda Region Wayfinding

- map-based information panel
- vitreous enamel.

City of Whitehorse: Box Hill – Connecting Places

- information panels with maps
- steel panel with vinyl graphics.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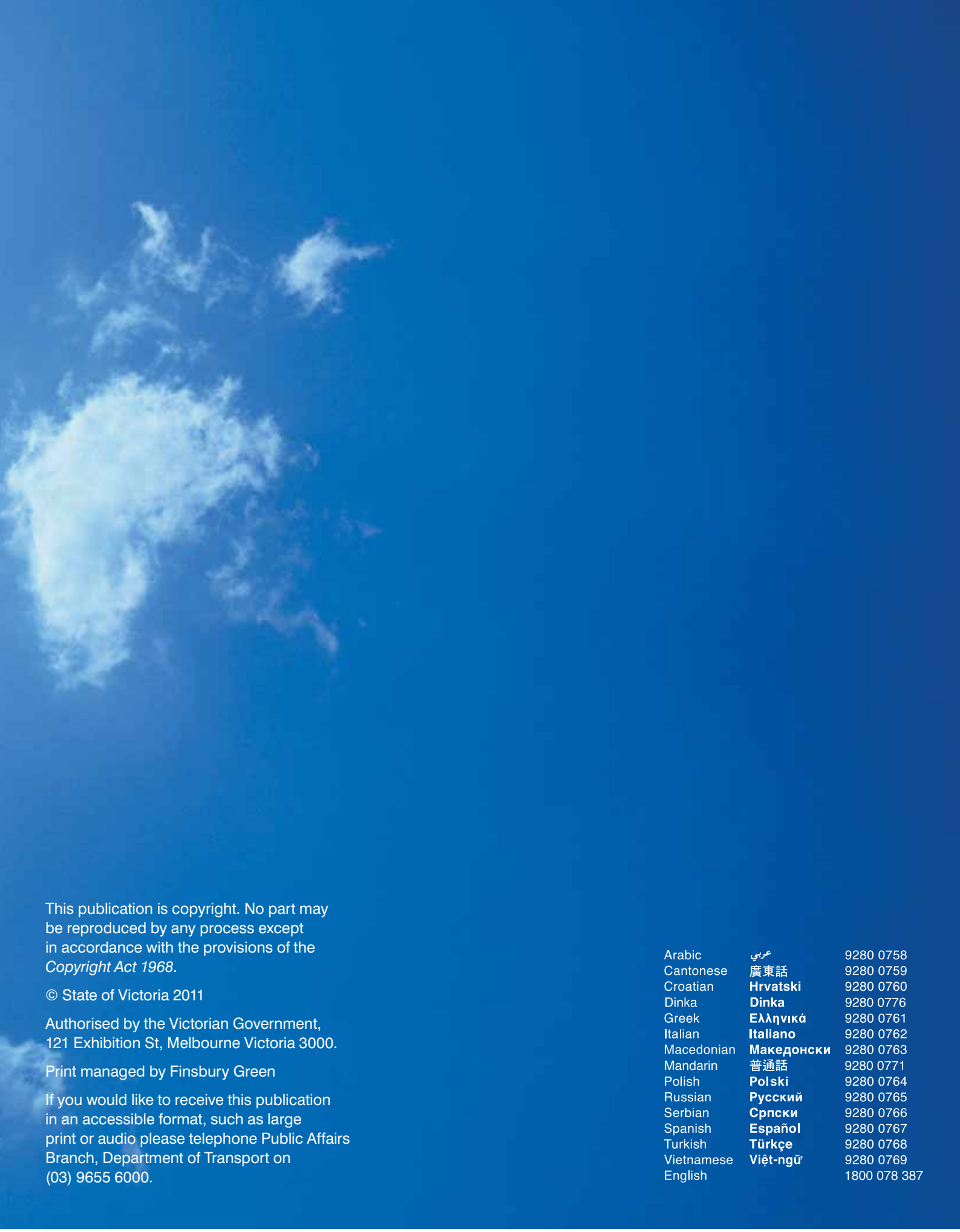
via Dunnes Lane
City Oval 400m,
via Dunnes Lane
Central Coburg



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