



TTC Wayfinding Strategy

Date: May 13, 2020
To: TTC Board
From: Chief Customer Officer

Summary

This report outlines TTC's Wayfinding Strategy (the Strategy) which will identify potential wayfinding-related improvements to the TTC system.

The Strategy builds on TTC's *5-Year Service Plan & 10-Year Outlook*, which identifies service-related improvements to public transit service in the City of Toronto between 2020-2024 and beyond.

The Strategy's scope includes seven key priorities designed to provide TTC customers with wayfinding improvements that promote an optimal customer experience while using public transit in Toronto and the surrounding region.

The Strategy includes consultation with customers, stakeholders and partners at the City and the surrounding region to be confident the Strategy meets the needs of customers and that we have their support to proceed with implementation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the TTC Board:

1. Endorse the TTC Wayfinding Strategy.

Financial Summary

Approval of this report has no 2020 financial impact, beyond the \$0.563 million included in the 2020 Operating Budget for Wayfinding initiatives.

\$1.973 million was included in the 2020-2029 Capital Budget & Plan approved by the TTC Board on December 16, 2019 for System Route Map (SRM) improvements. Any incremental requirements confirmed through the Wayfinding Strategy will be submitted for the Board's consideration in the 2022 Budget process.

The Interim Chief Financial Officer has reviewed the report and agrees with the Financial Impact information.

Equity/Accessibility Matters

The TTC has a strong organizational commitment to making Toronto's transit system barrier-free and accessible to all. We believe all customers should enjoy the freedom, independence and flexibility to travel anywhere on the public transit system, regardless of ability. One of the critical paths noted in the TTC Corporate Plan 2018-2022 is to "Make taking public transit seamless". This means ensuring the customer journey is easy, frictionless and barrier-free, regardless of accessibility needs.

The Strategy complements the TTC's Easier Access Program, which is on track to make all subway stations accessible by 2025 with elevators, wide fare-gates and automatic sliding doors, as well as the TTC's *2019-2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan*. It will also recommend accessibility improvements across the transit system, including simpler wayfinding, and consistent use of braille on elevator buttons and at customer help points.

In partnership with the CNIB, we have piloted Beacon technology at St Clair Station to provide accessibility improvements for customers with vision-loss. We will now review the potential to implement this technology system-wide.

Additionally, the strategy incorporates improvements to facilitate access for people in different neighbourhoods, speaking different languages and for newcomers and tourists.

Consultation will be conducted with accessibility stakeholders to ensure that the Strategy meets the needs of TTC customers and provides accessibility for all and that we have support to proceed with implementation.

Decision History

At the October, 2013 Board meeting the TTC Board received the *New TTC Wayfinding Standard*.

Presentation:

[https://www.ttc.ca/About the TTC/Commission reports and information/Commission meetings/2013/October 23/Reports/New Wayfinding Standards Presentation.pdf](https://www.ttc.ca/About%20the%20TTC/Commission%20reports%20and%20information/Commission%20meetings/2013/October%2023/Reports/New%20Wayfinding%20Standards%20Presentation.pdf)

At the May, 2019 Board meeting the TTC Board received the *2019-2023 TTC Multi-Year Accessibility Plan* report.

[http://www.ttc.ca/About the TTC/Commission reports and information/Commission meetings/2019/May 8/Reports/6 2019-2023 TTC Multiyear Accessibility Plan.pdf](http://www.ttc.ca/About%20the%20TTC/Commission%20reports%20and%20information/Commission%20meetings/2019/May%208/Reports/6%202019-2023%20TTC%20Multiyear%20Accessibility%20Plan.pdf)

At the December, 2019 Board meeting the TTC Board received the TTC's *5-Year Service Plan & 10-Year Outlook* report.

Report:

[https://www.ttc.ca/About the TTC/Commission reports and information/Commission meetings/2019/December 12/Reports/16 5 Year Service Plan and 10 Year Outlook.pdf](https://www.ttc.ca/About%20the%20TTC/Commission%20reports%20and%20information/Commission%20meetings/2019/December%2012/Reports/16%205%20Year%20Service%20Plan%20and%2010%20Year%20Outlook.pdf)

Attachment:

[https://www.ttc.ca/About the TTC/Commission reports and information/Commission meetings/2019/December 12/Reports/Attachment%20%201%20TTC 5 year SP web accessible R3.pdf](https://www.ttc.ca/About%20the%20TTC/Commission%20reports%20and%20information/Commission%20meetings/2019/December%2012/Reports/Attachment%20%201%20TTC%205%20year%20SP%20web%20accessible%20R3.pdf)

At the January, 2020 Board meeting the TTC Board raised the Motion – *Executing Bilingual Subway Signage at New Stations*.

Notice of Motion:

[https://www.ttc.ca/About the TTC/Commission reports and information/Commission meetings/2020/January 27/Reports/Decisions/8 Notice of Motion Executing Bilingual Subway Signage at New.pdf](https://www.ttc.ca/About%20the%20TTC/Commission%20reports%20and%20information/Commission%20meetings/2020/January%2027/Reports/Decisions/8%20Notice%20of%20Motion%20Executing%20Bilingual%20Subway%20Signage%20at%20New.pdf)

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Issue Background

In 2012, TTC began implementing the new Signage and Wayfinding Standards. Since then, all new and ongoing construction projects followed these standards. These included: elevator additions, second exit additions to stations, subway line extensions, and general state of good repair initiatives. This has led to thousands of signs being updated and replaced over the past eight years.

Though this fact on its own is a very positive sign, there still is a great deal of work that remains to be completed. The Strategy seeks to identify what remains to be completed and will chart a course to completion.

The Strategy builds on TTC's *5-Year Service Plan & 10-Year Outlook*, which identifies service-related improvements to public transit service in the City of Toronto between 2020-2024 and beyond. This Plan, first brought before the Board in December 2019, provides a framework for enhancements to the transit system. As we move forward with these service and customer experience enhancements, improvements to wayfinding will complement these important initiatives.

The vision of the Strategy is to do everything possible to provide TTC customers with the wayfinding tools they need so that they enjoy an optimal customer experience when using public transit in Toronto and the surrounding region.

The Strategy's scope focuses on seven key priorities that will collectively improve wayfinding for our customers across the entire TTC system.

1. Street-level wayfinding signage

We will add prominent street-level wayfinding signage around TTC stations that improves the visibility of access points to the system. When subway entrances are easier to find public transit becomes more accessible for everyone.

2. **Replace old, out-of-date signage**

Many signs in the system remain from the original opening of the system. These no longer meet today's requirements. We will audit the prevalence of this issue and chart a course to updating all signage, system-wide, to meet current TTC Standards. Additionally, we will explore options for bilingual signage and options to reflect local neighbourhoods and any linguistic concentrations around the subway lines for customers.

3. **Points of interest signage**

Many customers, including new residents of the city and tourists, use the TTC to visit points of interest such as museums, sports venues or shopping centres. We will study what wayfinding tools these customers need most. This research will inform potential improvements to wayfinding signage, maps and the TTC website.

4. **Focus on regional transit hubs**

TTC connects with regional transit partners at busy regional transit hubs. Among these, Pearson Airport is one of the busiest. We know transitions between modes and service providers at regional transit hubs must be seamless and friction-free. We'll study what wayfinding improvements can make these busy hubs function optimally for our customers.

5. **Accessible beacon technology**

Recent innovations in beacon positioning technology provide customers with vision-loss with new tools to self-navigate public transit. In partnership with the CNIB, a test of beacon positioning technology was piloted at St Clair Station. Beacons provide directional guidance for customers using smart phones. We will now review the potential to implement this technology system-wide. New technology like beacons can improve accessibility for the entire transit journey: in stations, on vehicles and at stop markers.

6. **Virtual reality station models**

Virtual reality (VR) models of TTC stations can enable customers to explore the TTC system remotely and create virtual journey plans. We'll study how this technology can be provided for all TTC stations and provided online for our customers.

7. **Interactive information kiosks**

Interactive information kiosks can provide customers with a broad array of journey planning tools: Up-to-date maps, route planning suggestions, real-time vehicle arrival information, system status updates and informative advertising. We will focus on how interactive information kiosks can provide customers with the information they need when and where they need it.

Comments

Next steps

1. Public and Stakeholder Consultation

Subject to the Board's direction, our next steps will be consultation and engagement with customers, stakeholders, partners at City Hall and regional transit service providers. We will seek out additional ideas to improve wayfinding for all customers with particular attention paid to the wayfinding standards of GTHA transit agencies. We will ensure that the Strategy meets the needs of TTC customers and provides accessibility for all and that we have support to proceed with implementation. Consultation and engagement activities will include:

1. Online surveys
2. Public "pop-up" meetings
3. Focus-group testing
4. Meetings with stakeholder groups. For example, Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT)

When developing our consultation plan, we will follow four key principles. We will be:

- Proactive
- Inclusive
- Accessible
- Transparent

2. Implementation Plan and Budget

Informed by the Board's guidance and the output from the Public and Stakeholder Consultations, staff will report back to the Board with a completed Wayfinding Strategy in February 2021. The Strategy will detail the scope of improvements, anticipated outcomes, timelines, and any additional funding that may be required.

Contact

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Signature

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Chief Customer Officer

Attachments

Appendix A – Key Priority Examples

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1. Street-level wayfinding signage



Signs like the one in this example rendering, can make it easier to find TTC entrances.

2. Replace old, out-of-date signage

**EXIT – BUSES AND
KEELE ST.**

Some examples of inconsistent out-of-date signage in TTC stations.

**WESTBOUND
PLATFORM**

To Streetcars, Buses, Spadina Avenue and Bloor Street West
Transfer to University-Spadina Trains, via Pedestrian Walkway

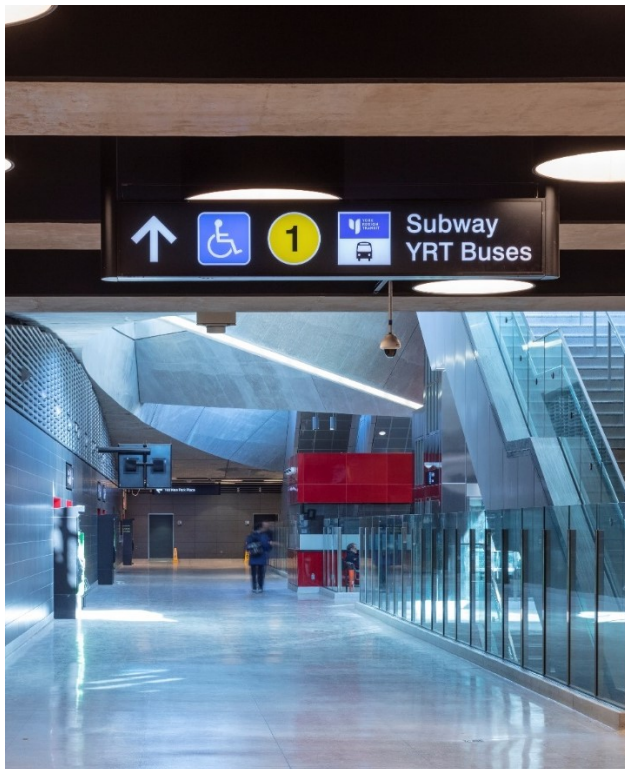
EXIT To Walmer Road and Bloor Street West

3. Points of interest signage



This rendering illustrates a way a point-of-interest like the ROM could be hi-lighted on directional signage.

4. Focus on regional transit hubs



An example of how we can identify regional transit partners and modes on signage at transit hubs.

5. Accessible beacon technology



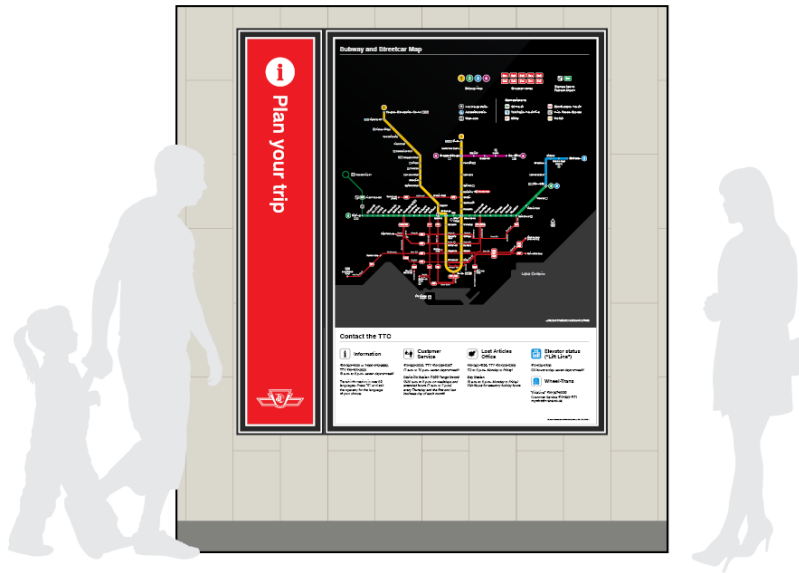
Beacons provide directional guidance for customers using smart phones.

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