



City of Issaquah Wayfinding Project Frequently Asked Questions Updated April 27, 2020

What is the difference between a wayfinding system and a sign?

Wayfinding is a system of signs and visual cues that helps residents, visitors and employees navigate through a city, guiding them to key destinations such as parks, trails, businesses, schools and transit stops. A single sign, on the other hand, can indicate to someone that they have arrived at the right place or directly point them in the right direction, but does not guide them every step of the way. Wayfinding signs are often placed before an intersection or at a decision-making location, helping residents and visitors reach their destinations efficiently and easily.

Effective wayfinding often directs people to or through natural destinations, encouraging them get outside and interact with the environment. Wayfinding can be particularly important for active modes of travel such as walking, biking, and rolling, which rely more heavily on street-level visual cues to decide which path to take or street to explore.

How is wayfinding different from using navigation applications (apps)?

With the growing popularity of navigational apps like Google Maps, Apple Maps, and Waze, some may feel that wayfinding signage is no longer necessary. While these apps can provide directions to a single place, wayfinding communicates that walking, biking or rolling between places is possible. It also can help to create a sense of cohesion between different destinations, communicating that they are part of a larger place.

Why is the City of Issaquah doing a new wayfinding project?

Issaquah's current wayfinding system is inconsistent, which can lead to confusion. As Issaquah continues to grow, we are investing in our wayfinding across the city to ensure that we continue to serve a diverse group of residents and visitors. Wayfinding ensures residents and visitors know how to travel throughout Issaquah and find our great selection of civic, cultural, educational and outdoor offerings. Once residents or visitors stop at one destination in our downtown or in one of our neighborhoods, wayfinding can help to ensure that they stay and visit multiple destinations, boosting our economy. Wayfinding also supports sustainability goals by encouraging walking, cycling and rolling. Wayfinding around the city can spark curiosity and encourage users to wander into new places they may never would imagine going to otherwise.

How long will the project take?

Early project work began in fall 2019. Work was paused during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic as the City of Issaquah responded to critical needs. The design phase and community engagement began in late



winter and spring 2021. The project team will present a comprehensive wayfinding system to Issaquah City Council for approval in late 2021.

How will the City of Issaquah decide what wayfinding will look like?

Led by the Parks & Recreation Department, the City is undertaking a comprehensive planning effort. We are working with a steering group that includes businesses, tourism groups, residents and cultural organizations. The steering group and the City will craft a new vision for our signage based on the public input we receive. The future design will align with the City of Issaquah's current style guide and branding. The project team will present a wayfinding system to Issaquah City Council for approval in late 2021.

What will the final product be?

The final product will be a comprehensive citywide wayfinding system, master plan with proposed sign locations, and construction documents for immediate sign installation at some of the key locations identified in the plan. The City will also develop full-size sign prototypes at proposed locations to test the new signs. Moving forward, the annual budget will determine the sign implementation schedule.

Is the city taking away private business signs?

No, the wayfinding system will complement existing City facility signs, encouraging tourism and connecting people to businesses and amenities.

What will happen to wayfinding and facility signage that are replaced?

Some signage may be moved to other locations throughout the City. Other signs will be either disposed of or recycled, depending on the materials and condition.

Which cities already have wayfinding?

Many small cities have programs to promote wayfinding, connecting different neighborhoods and guiding residents and visitors to amenities. Recently, other small cities in the Puget Sound region, including Burien, Shoreline, Redmond and Lake Stevens, have been updating their wayfinding systems.

How I can get involved with the project?

We want to hear from you about what is important to you as we develop the city facilities and wayfinding signage concepts. Our community outreach will include an online survey in spring 2021. The project team will post weatherized project materials throughout the city so residents can learn more about the project and design concepts in a socially distant setting.

Visit our website to learn more and sign up for email updates: issaquahwa.gov/wayfinding.



For more information, contact: Jennifer Fink, Park Planner and Project Administrator, (425) 837-3322, jenniferf@issaquahwa.gov.