

Final strategy report

August 2011



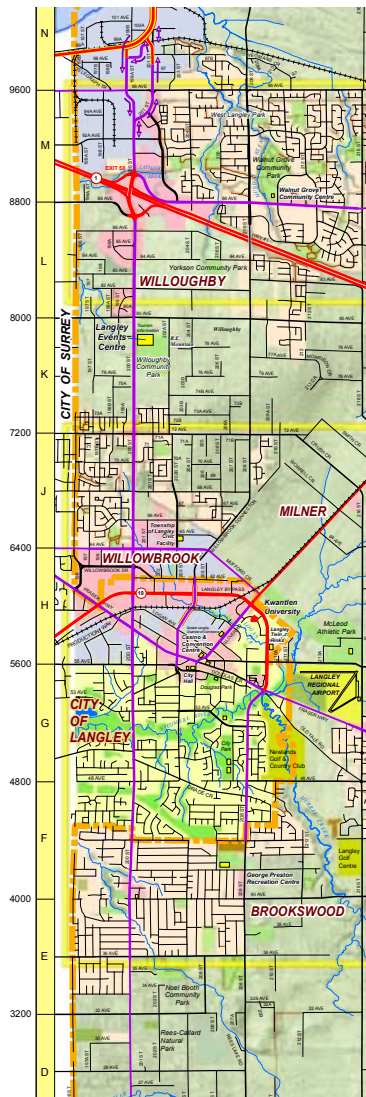
applied_
wayfinding information design

member of the Edenspiekermann alliance

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Communicating the City's location at the centre of regional activity rather than the edge of the Township will improve sense of place for identity and directions

Applied was commissioned by the City of Langley to develop a multi-modal wayfinding strategy. This strategy was identified as one of the actions in the City's Downtown Master Plan necessary to support business, encourage visiting and help residents make smarter travel choices.

Objectives

A detailed process of research, auditing, survey and consultation provided seven objectives for the wayfinding strategy.

1. Improving driver awareness of and directions to Downtown Langley from through highway routes.
2. Better directions to Downtown parking and key destinations
3. Helping residents to walk and cycle in the City
4. Encouraging residents to visit Downtown and City facilities
5. Improving transit information
6. Promoting Downtown as a complementary destination to shopping at Willowbrook Mall and the Langley Bypass
7. Supporting the City's 'The Place to Be Brand' and its economic and development objectives

Strategic recommendations

The study makes a number of strategic recommendations. At its core are users: residents, visitors, businesses and other stakeholders who have an interest in the future success of the City. The design of information needs to be user-centred, accessible, coordinated, easy to use and be at the heart of journey planning in Langley.

The strategic recommendations fall within four themes:

Connect the City: connect the disparate areas of the City: Downtown, Downtown Core, residential areas. Create a network of routes that keep routing simple and break barriers to walking.

Create a Welcome: create the best possible first impression by placing quality information at the arrival points providing visitors with orientation and helpful information.

Design development: necessary planning stages and opportunities for wayfinding to support and integrate with other City initiatives.

Project planning: options and high level estimates for implementing the strategy over a period of three years

Projects

Phase A – Strategy approval

Phase B projects should be implemented in the short term, within five years. They support core navigation around the City for sustainable modes.

Project 1 - City map

Project 2 – City directions

Project 3 - Highway signage

Phase C projects relate more specifically to City development, resident's wayfinding and integration of the Downtown area. They are proposed in the second year of the program,

Project 4 – Downtown orientation

Project 5 - Cycling network

Project 6 - Walking network

Project 7 - Construction signage

Phase D projects can be implemented in the third year and beyond. They are projects which support the long term ambitions of the Downtown Master Plan and the associated development and infrastructure changes.

Project 8 - City gateways

Project 9 - Exploring Downtown

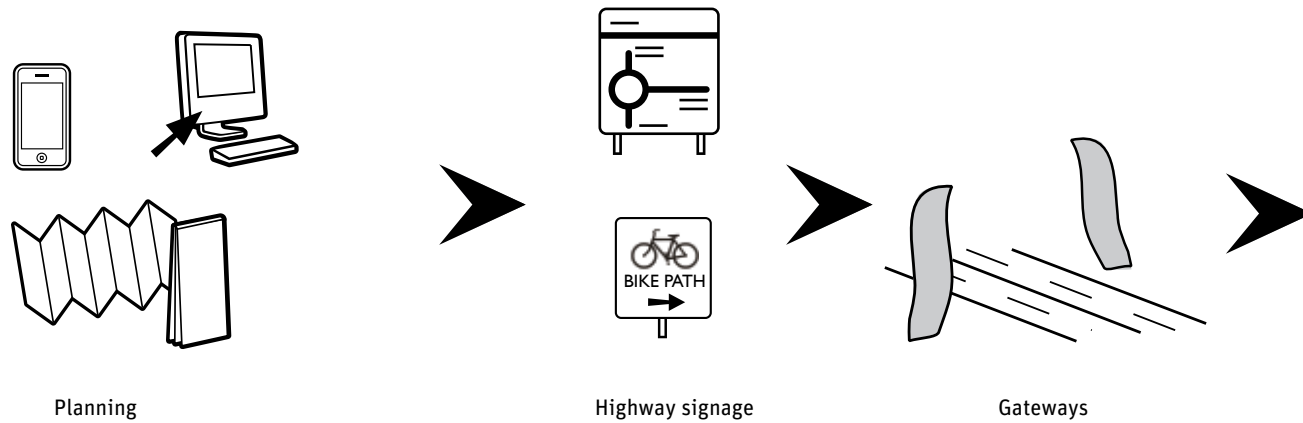
Project 10 - Transit passenger information

It is estimated that the implementation of the program may have a budget requirement of approximately \$580,000 over three years. This is prioritised into a suggested annual budget of \$130,000 in year 1, \$150,000 in year 2 and \$300,000 in year three,

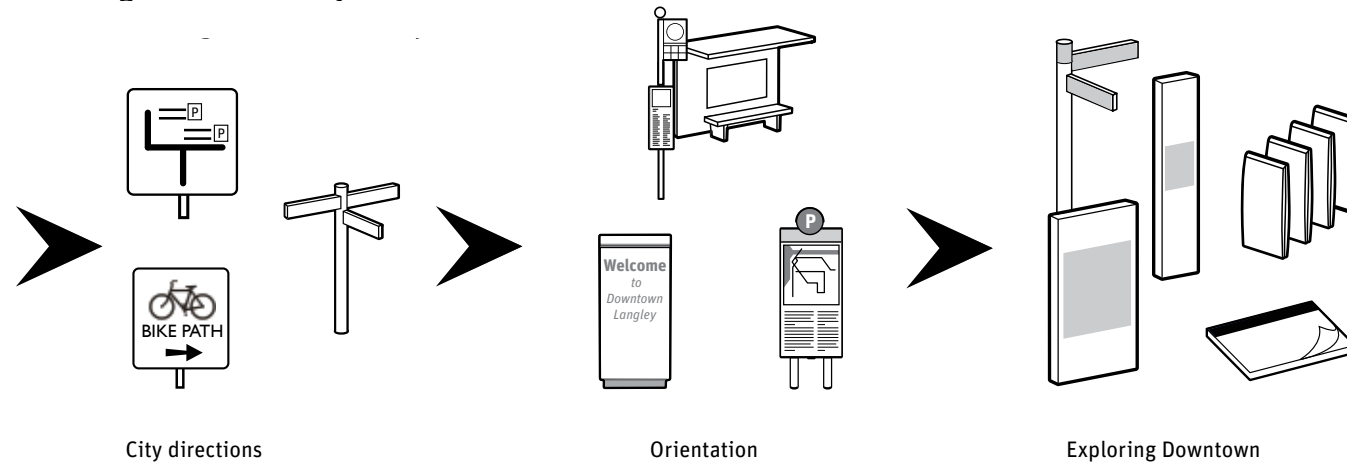
Overview of wayfinding typology

The recommended wayfinding strategy provides elements to support journeys by visitors or residents to the City and within its Downtown by car, bus, bike or on foot.

Travelling to the City



Travelling within the City



High quality contemporary signs based on walking maps would help support Downtown businesses and visitor development.

Part 0 Introduction

0.1 Scope

Applied was appointed by the City of Langley to research wayfinding needs in the City and recommend a strategy for a multi-modal signage and information project focused on supporting the Downtown Master Plan.

The strategy is intended to set a direction for detailed design and implementation of wayfinding over the next few years and in parallel with the regeneration of the City into a master-planned and complete community.

The scope of this strategy were set out in the Request for Proposals:

- *a) Developing a comprehensive wayfinding signage strategy with input from community stakeholder groups, including Downtown Langley Business Association, Tourism Langley and Cascades Casino Coast Hotel & Convention Centre. The City of Langley is co-owner of the Cascades Casino Coast Hotel & Convention Centre complex.*
- *b) Designing maps/information panels for the wayfinding structures,*
- *c) Developing guidelines around what level of detail should be provided to give pertinent wayfinding information,*
- *d) Developing guidelines and placement plan for the location of structures within the public realm in such a manner as to facilitate pedestrian and vehicular orientation (all modes of travel).*
- *e) Document the existing wayfinding signage in the public realm and propose what stays and what goes in such a manner that what stays is relevant and complements the maps and information panels with the proposed wayfinding signage structures.*
- *f) Prioritize wayfinding signage elements for implementation.*

0.2 Overview

Changing City

The City of Langley is in a period of rapid and profound change. At the local level the downtown area has been rebuilt since the departure of financial services that occurred when customer demand for drive-thru services meant downtown locations were no longer viable. Within a short period the resulting vacancies began to be filled with a new and eclectic mix of individually owned niche stores together with a new focus in the form of the a new focus in the form of the casino and convention centre.

The downtown of Langley is also home to hundreds of families which will increase hugely with as many as 4,000 new homes added over the next two decades to accommodate the planned 30%¹ increase in population to some 32,950 people by 2031.

The City is embracing these challenges through the framework provided by the Official Community Plan (2006) and actions detailed in specific plans which notably include an innovative Downtown Master Plan (2009) and the Master Transportation Plan (2004).



Changing Region

The City of Langley has always held a strategic location on major inter-regional routes. This location has become more important as the metro region sets out its spatial development plans.

The Liveable Region Strategic Plan established the City as one of only eight Regional Town Centres. With this status came a source of provincial funding and private development to facilitate planned growth.

A major example of this elevation in importance was the Golden Ears bridge which in turn created a development corridor with the City in the centre of a ribbon of new homes and businesses that will stretch from the Fraser River to the US border.

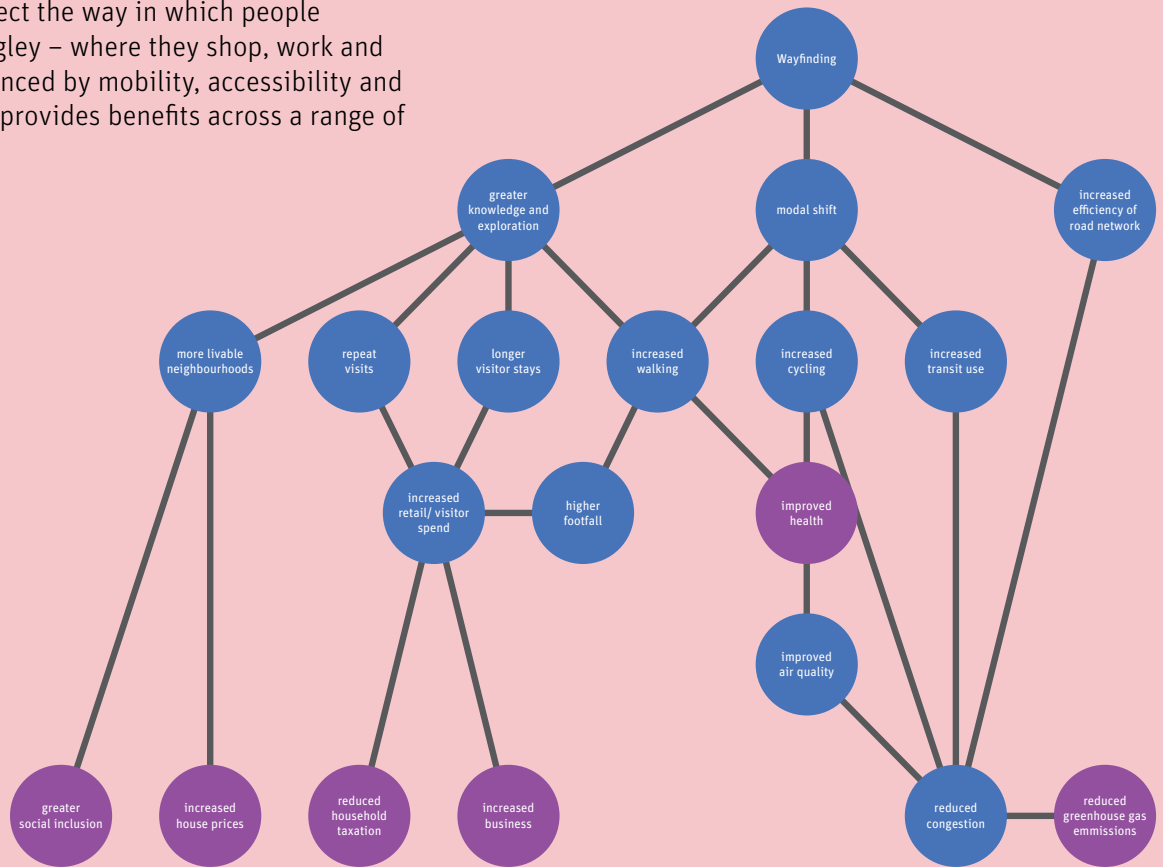
Alongside its own predicted increases in residential population the regional plan forecasts an enormous increase in residents and jobs around the City and in new Township areas such as Walnut Grove and Willoughby. This resident population may come to view Downtown Langley as a Main Street experience complementing the specific attractions of local big box developments and malls.

0.3 The benefits of wayfinding

Wayfinding is a term used to describe how we process information from our environment to decide how to get from one place to another and is associated with memory and a range of physical and sensory cues we learn over time.

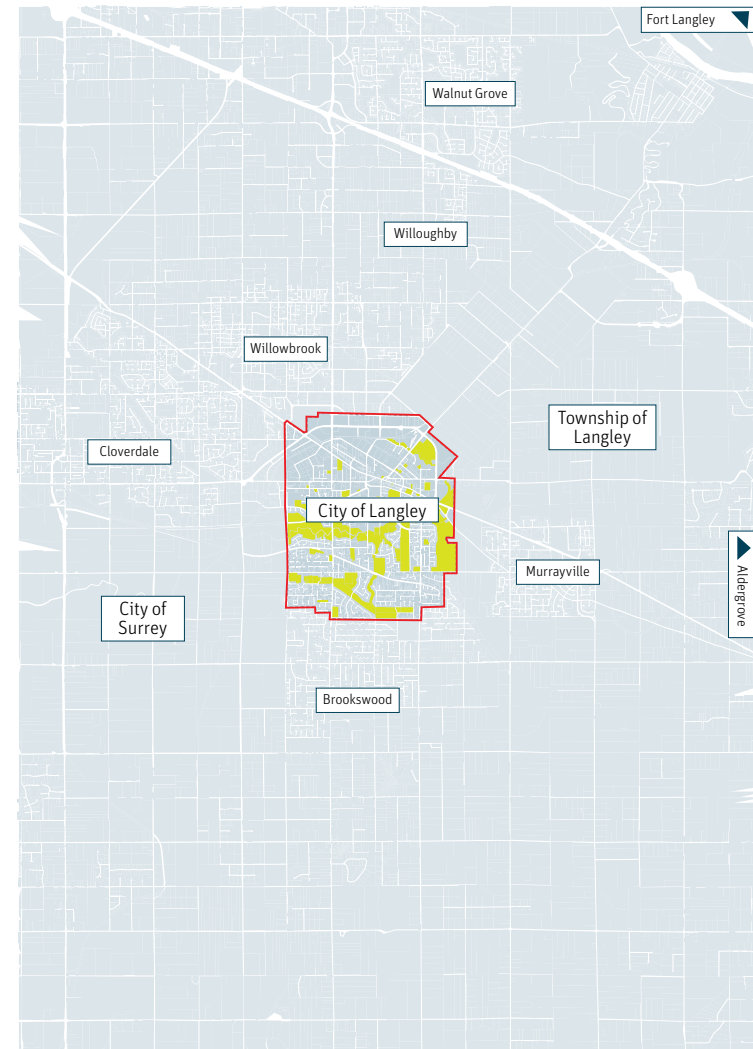
Cities that have adopted wayfinding strategies have found that improving the legibility of a City helps support business, tourism, sustainable transportation and sense of place.

Wayfinding can directly affect the way in which people understand the City of Langley – where they shop, work and spend leisure time is influenced by mobility, accessibility and knowledge – which in turn provides benefits across a range of socio-economic factors.



0.4 Study Area

There is a natural focus on the Downtown of Langley but the study must consider both the internal connectivity for its citizens and the wider influence and draw of the City in this fast developing region of Metro Vancouver.



Part 1 Strategy

1. Strategy

1.1 Principles and objectives

This report proposes a strategy for improving wayfinding for driving, transit, walking and cycling in the City of Langley.

Objectives

The objectives of the strategy have been derived from discussion and research and fall into the following themes:

- 1. Improving driver awareness of and directions to Downtown Langley from through highway routes.**
- 2. Better directions to Downtown parking and key destinations**
- 3. Helping residents to walk and cycle in the City**
- 4. Encouraging residents to visit Downtown and City facilities**
- 5. Improving transit information**
- 6. Promoting Downtown as a complementary destination to shopping at Willowbrook Mall and the Langley Bypass**
- 7. Supporting the City's 'The Place to Be Brand' and its economic and development objectives**

Principles

The scope of the brief for this strategy is all modes of travel and both visitors and residents. This represent a wide range of user needs and requires some principles to be established to ensure all the individual recommendations fit together into a system that is simple, clear and consistent. These are listed here.

1. Seamless

Integrating information across modes reflects the real journeys that people make.

2. Stepping Stones

Stepping stones will assist people's memory and provide connections for the traveller.

3. System Naming

The consistent naming of places and things in the environment allows people to communicate what and where places are.

4. System Codes

Codes are used as short-cuts for memory and for simplifying complicated systems and include colours, numbers, icons and names.

5. Progressive Disclosure

All things cannot be signed from all locations. Progressive disclosure provides a rationale for what information is needed where.

6. Predictable

Information consistency, integrity and most-of-all availability are crucial to achieving predictability.

7. Don't Make me Think

Keep it simple. The simpler the information the easier it will be to understand.

8. Inclusive

Information should be provided so that it does not exclude any group or individual, with particular focus on disability groups.

9. Help Me to Learn

Information that is easy to learn is more likely to be used. Teach people how easy route choices are and modal change is more likely.

10. Tone of voice

Provide information with the right tone of voice in the right way and people are more likely to engage with it.

1. Strategy

1.2 Structuring journey information

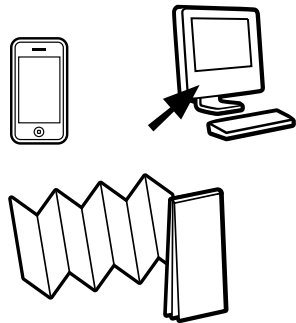
Wayfinding is a process of decision making using inputs and memory.

When we travel we generally require increasing detail as a journey progresses. This takes us from planning through decisions about directions and onto specific information related to the mode of travel we use and the destinations we seek.

The legibility of a place helps us form a mental map and makes us feel confident and comfortable. Orientation is a critical part of wayfinding and largely dependent on visual cues that may include natural or manufactured landmarks.

The elements that provide planning, orientation and directions should have a number of consistent features to help communicate them as a simple, trusted and familiar system. The use of the same reference names, designs and placement create an identity for the system and place.

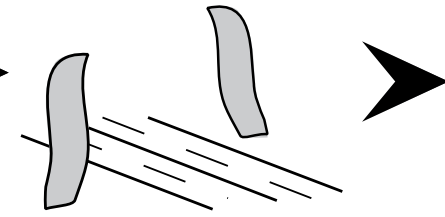
Travelling to the City



Planning

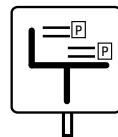


Highway signage

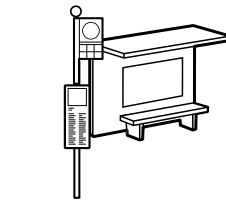
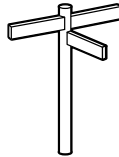


Gateways

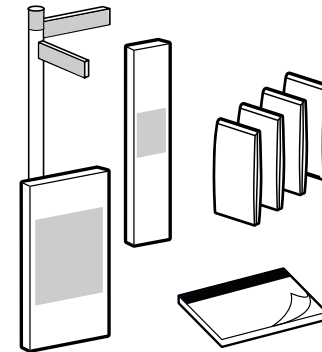
Travelling within the City



City directions



Orientation



Exploring Downtown

2.0 Recommendations

Recommendations are divided into four themes:

2.1 Connect the City

Visitor directional signs and ways to raise awareness of City and Downtown identity.

2.2 Create a welcome

Information that helps residents and visitors to explore the City and its Downtown as it develops and grows

2.3 Design development

Integrating wayfinding into City policy

2.4 Project planning

The processes and options to define and deliver the strategy

2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the city

The objective of the wayfinding strategy is to provide a multi-modal system to help visitors and residents to find their way around the City more easily. Achieving this requires any system to consider the various ways in which different people can or might travel.

Our approach is to consider the user and their needs while they travel. This understanding is then converted into a series of information elements by breaking the journey into decision stages. Depending on how people travel their decision stages and information needs will differ. We have structured our recommendations into three areas:

Driver signs - Drivers require a specific and regulated system of information that is highly edited for safe legibility. Guide signs help direct traffic to destinations by progressively disclosing detail over a series of signs. Included in driver signs are also signals of arrival and welcome necessary to confirm location.

Active Travel - Travelling by bike or on foot is more flexible than motorised travel. Trails and paths are options that are not available to traffic. However, generally these modes travel less far and may be considered in the City to relate predominantly to resident travel and, in the case of walking, to the mode most suited to exploring the Downtown core once a driver or transit passenger has arrived.

Transit information - A transit passenger is a dependent traveller, they trust the driver to get them to the stop closest to their destination. A passenger's needs relate to schedules and orientation to ensure they alight in the correct place and are able to identify onward journey choices. Langley is made up of many places: neighbourhoods, precincts, spaces, parks, retail centres,

buildings. The strategy needs to connect the places together in a rational, predictable and legible way to help users navigate the City and its surroundings.

This is achieved by developing an understanding of the structure of the City, what are the barriers to movement, how places are described and what they are called, creating an optimised network of pedestrian and vehicular routes.

Place names are an important element in helping people understand their environment and how places relate to each other and we recommend that a place naming workshop is staged to define the naming hierarchy and identify place names.

The City needs to be connected via a network of appropriate routes. Hierarchies have become a common tool for prioritising the road network for both vehicles and cyclists, however, pedestrian route hierarchies are less common, but are equally necessary in order to prioritise pedestrian routing and information.

The hierarchy can be interpreted as a network of routes that connect places, attractions, arrival points and transit. The points at which the routes start, end, cross, merge and diverge are decision points for pedestrians and in these locations information should be provided to support journeys.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the city

Driver signs

Driver guide signs progressively disclose details about destinations according to a hierarchy of names and a system of sign types. This follows the normal journey planning process of progressively finer journey stages until the final destination is reached.

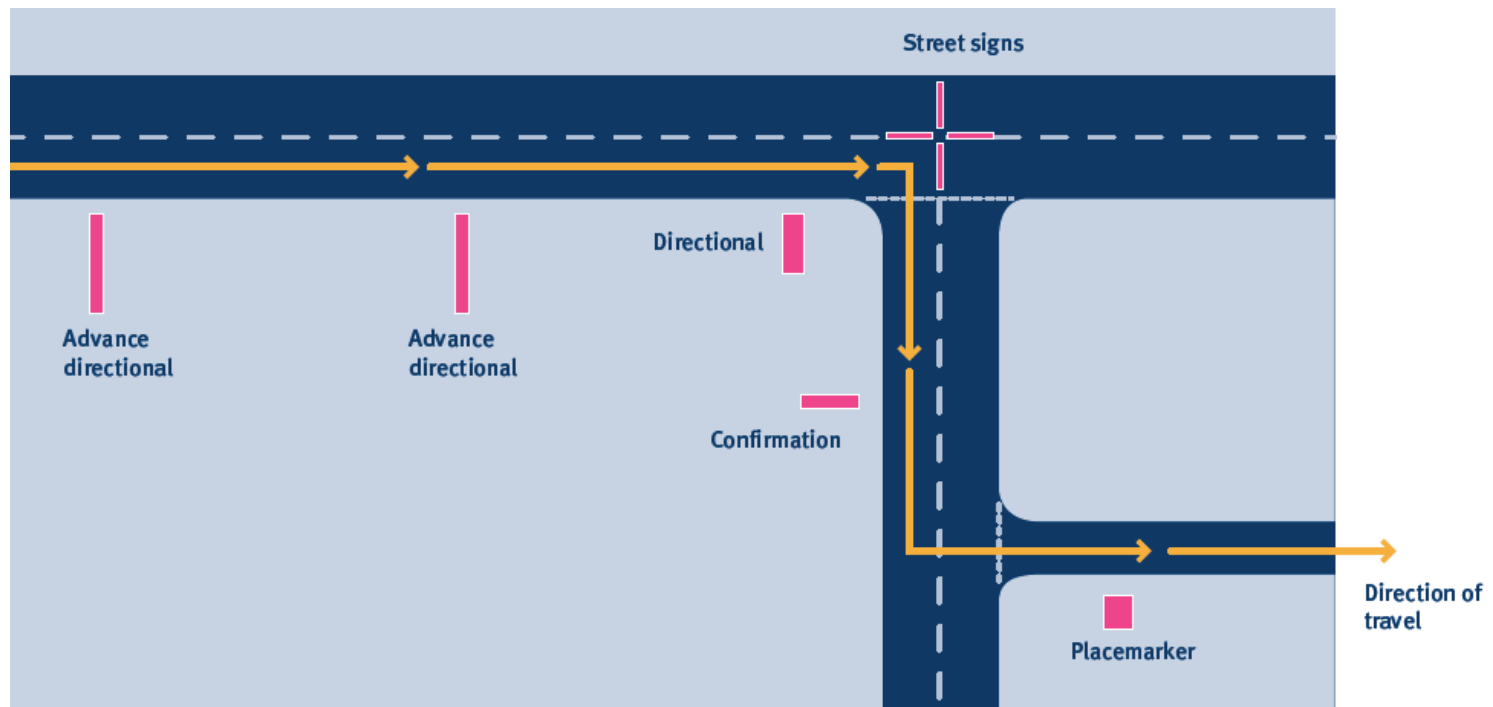
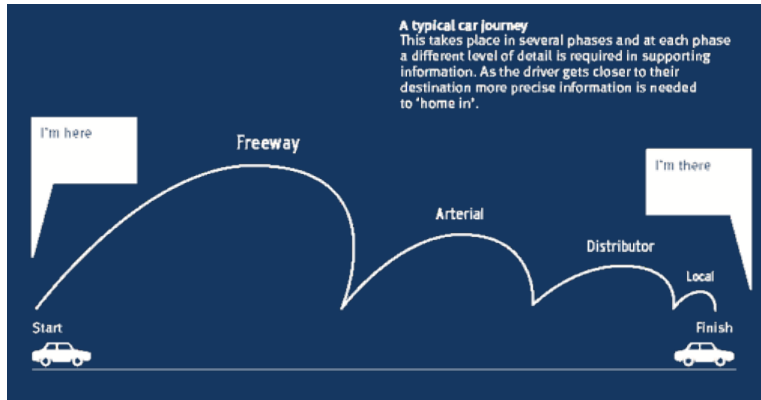
Guide signs are typically grouped into three types as shown below right:

1. **Advance directional signs** are located before decision points allowing drivers to safely manoeuvre into the correct lane. These generally show major destinations only.

2. **Directional signs** mark the point of a change of direction and will refer to destinations reached on the new route.

3. **Confirmation signs** inform the driver that they are on the correct course or, in the form of a place marker, that they have arrived at a destination.

A similar system of information is proposed for the City of Langley. The components of the recommended system are described in the following pages.



Typical arrangement of guide signs

2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the city

Driver signs - Highway signage

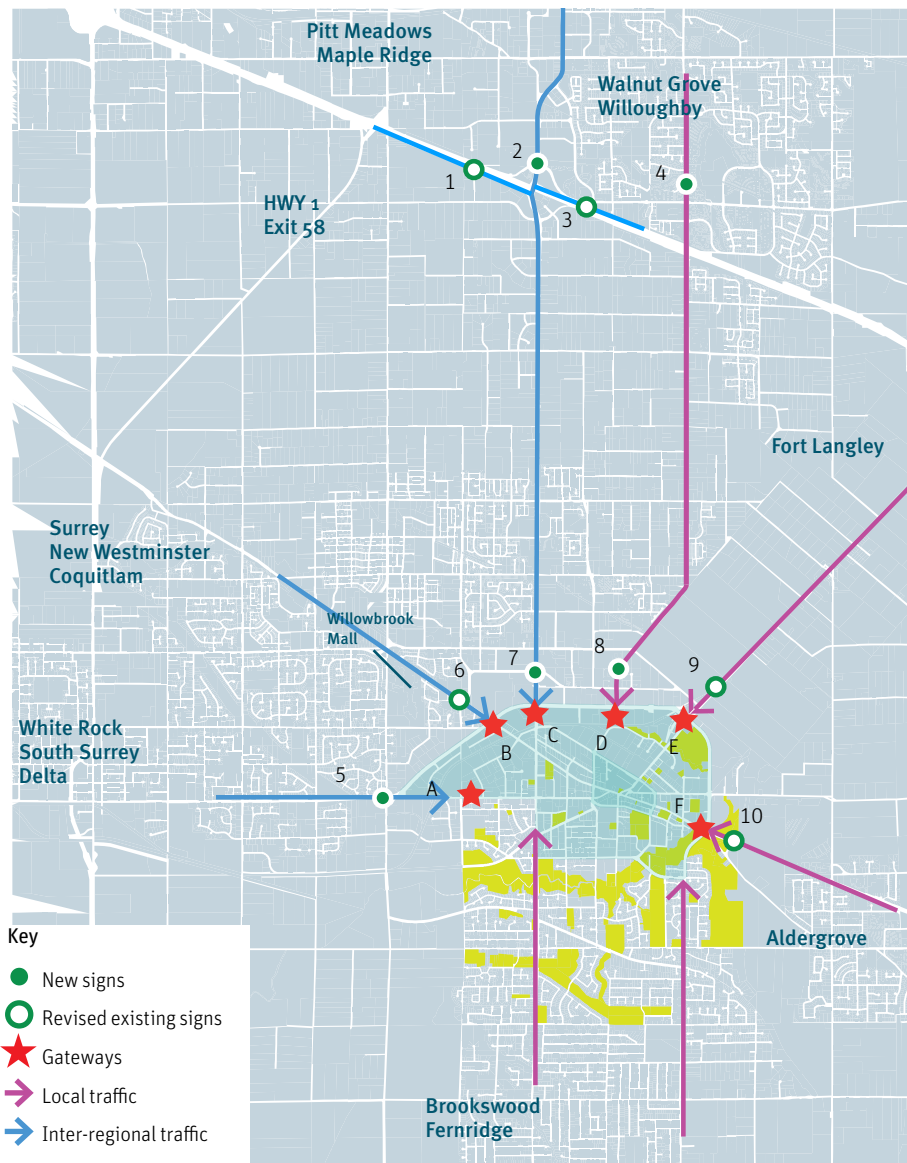
These are advance directional signs that inform drivers about the main routes into the City from the arterial network. The are largely located outside of the City limits and will therefore require agreement with neighbouring municipalities and the Ministry as appropriate.

The key concepts for these signs are to;

1. Refer to the 'City of Langley' consistently rather than the various forms currently seen, and
2. To provide a structure of guide signing that raises awareness of the City to complement existing awareness of other destinations such as Willowbrook Mall.

A draft schedule for these guide sign is shown right. All would need to conform to BC MOT standards.

These guide signs would lead to a series of gateways (A-F) arranged around the Langley Bypass, that would create a memorable entry to the City and provide a confirmation role. The concept for these gateways is described in more detail on the following page.



Draft schedule of proposed advance directional signs

Location	Type * (Owner)	Notes
1. Highway 1 eastbound approach Exit 58	BC MoST (MoT)	Revise to 'City of Langley'
2. Highway 1 westbound approach Exit 58	BC MoST (MoT)	Revise to 'City of Langley'
3. 200th St north of Highway 1 on ramps	BC MoST (Township)	Ahead to City of Langley
4. 204th St at 88th Ave	BC MoST (Township)	Ahead to City of Langley
5. 56th Ave at 192nd St	BC MoST (Surrey)	Left: Langley Bypass. Ahead: City of Langley
6. Fraser Highway at Hwy 10	BC MoST (City tbc)	Revise to 'City of Langley'
7. 200th Street at Willowbrook Dr	BC MoST (Township)	Right: Willowbrook SC. Ahead: City of Langley
8. 204th Street at 62nd Ave	BC MoST (City)	Ahead 'City of Langley' Left Exit to Langley Bypass
9. Glover Rd at 62nd Ave	BC MoST (City)	Revise to 'City of Langley'
10. Fraser Highway at Hwy 10	BC MoST (City tbc)	Revise to 'City of Langley'

* Note: BC MoST refers to standard highway guide signs contained in the BC MOT Manual of Standard Traffic Signs

2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the City

Driver signs - City gateways

One of the issues identified through research and observation has been the difficulty people have identifying the City of Langley from other areas.

For people travelling from the arterial routes there is value in marking points that will structure their mental maps of the area and trigger memories of the City.

There are various ways to mark boundaries. Signs such as the existing city pylon are effective when able to be seen but the built development that surrounds much of the City centre of Langley creates considerable visual noise that obscures small scale pylons.

As part of the new vision for the City we recommend considering a public arts project as an alternative. Such a program could be funded by the Community Amenity Charge/ Public Arts Fund and implemented with the support of the City Arts Advisory Committee.

This arts project could commission unique pieces of a series of pieces to form gateways at each of the five identified locations mentioned on the previous page and listed opposite.

The artists brief for the gateways could be very broad including lighting, road treatments, installations or landscaping. The only constraint in terms of wayfinding value would be that they should be memorable.

Proposed City gateway locations (see plan on previous page)

Location	Notes
A. 56th Ave at Production Way	
B. Fraser Highway (West) at Langley Bypass	
C. 200th St at Langley Bypass	
D. 204th St Bridge	Potential installation to enhance landmark of bridge
E. Glover Road at Langley Bypass	Possible collaboration with development sites
F. Fraser Highway (East) at Langley Bypass	



2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the city

Driver signs -City directions

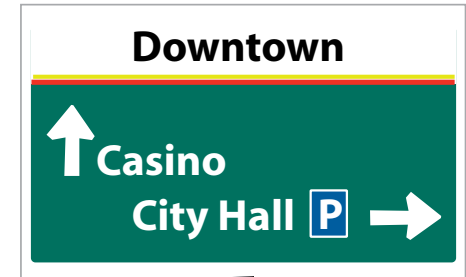
Once within City limits and particularly approaching Downtown, the information needs of visiting drivers become more focused.

The map indicates the location of advance directional and directional signs that would guide drivers to one of three types of destination:

1. Destinations on through routes
2. Public parking for general visits to the Downtown core. This would be simplified for drivers if each lot were named e.g. 'Car Hall Car Park'.
3. Specific destinations according to a hierarchy defined as part of detailed project development.

All signs should comply with BC MOT standards. However our recommendation is to apply for a custom design that could include a header bar that would identify the City neighbourhood. This addition would provide a locational fix as well as directions with minimal additional information content.

At three locations we also recommend confirmatory information in the form of thresholds that would welcome people to the Downtown core. These are described on the following page.



Conceptual example of a City Directional sign. This is based on standard BC MOT MoST design but includes the addition of a top tab in the form of a header bar that would be used to indicate the neighbourhood the driver was in. This would require custom sign approval from the Ministry.



In some situations it may be necessary to provide directions to 1 or 2 specific destinations that cannot be viewed from the street. In these circumstances smaller format signs may be more suitable. These would be based on normal BC MOT MoST standards.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the City

Driver signs - Downtown Welcome

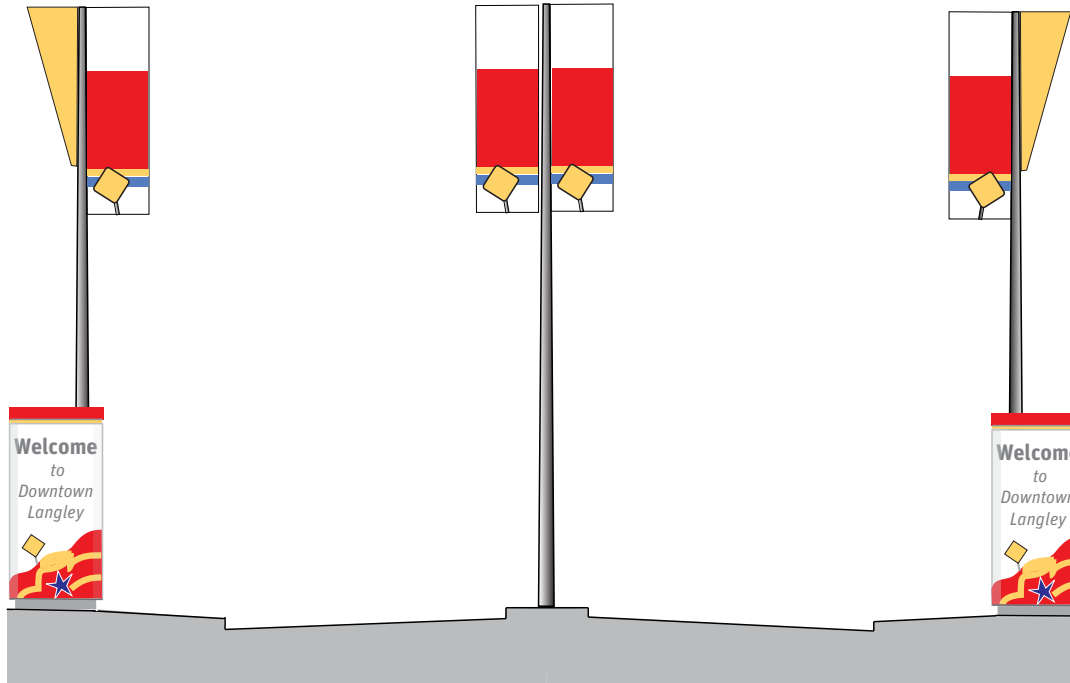
One of the successful initiatives used by the City has been to use street banners on the major approach roads to the Downtown core.

The impact of the banners may be increased by creating a focal threshold. This could be achieved by combining a series of perhaps three or four banners arranged together with the existing City pylon unit. The pylons may be refaced to more clearly welcome people to Downtown Langley.

On roads of 4 or more lanes and where possible, banners could be installed on medians to increase the impact. Placing banners and pylons on both sides of the street will further increase the impression of crossing a threshold.

Three potential locations for these thresholds have been identified at:

1. Glover Road at Logan Avenue
2. Fraser Highway at 201A Street
3. Fraser Highway at Logan Avenue



Conceptual arrangement of a Downtown Welcome threshold for a major road adapting elements already developed by the City



2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the City

Active travel - Cycling network

Network planning

The bike path network is included as a long-term aim of the Master Transportation Plan. The network divides approximately between shoulder lanes on busy routes and quieter routes on residential streets or off-street trails.

On the basis that cyclist guide signing would be most beneficial to encouraging new cyclists to undertake everyday journeys rather than experienced cyclists or leisure cycling; the proposed priority for signs would be:

1. Routes that link residential areas with the Downtown via quieter streets and off-street trails
2. Routes that link residential areas with workplaces and places of education via quieter streets and off-street trails
3. Linking routes within the City
4. Other routes

Design considerations

Guide signs for cycling are covered by the BC Provincial Sign Program Manual of Standard Traffic Signs section 1.3.

Typical applications include providing up to three destination directions and adding trail markers to signs to provide guidance to riders.

Guide signing for cyclists should follow the same hierarchical naming structure established under recommendation 4.2 above.

Specific design guidance for bicycle guidance in Langley is comprehensively covered in the Master Transportation Plan Appendix C, section 1.5.



2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the City

Active travel - Walking network

Signing for walking can become a very detailed process and if text signs are used exclusively, a comprehensive approach can require a large number of signs. Too many signs can begin to erode the environment they seek to encourage people to enjoy.

In line with the general objectives of the Master Transportation Plan we recommend that the priority for walking network signing is, as with cycling, to sign those routes that connect to the Downtown area.

Pedestrian signs are covered by the BC Provincial Sign Program Catalogue of Standard Traffic Signs section 1.2. However the catalogue does not include pedestrian guide signs. We recommend that walking guide signs consist of two main elements:

1) Direction blades - these would be located at the start and end of routes and point the way to the trail from the nearest through street, repeated if necessary to the trail head.

Direction blades should contain the destination that can be reached along the route and an approximate walk time. Simple names or icons for the route can then be remembered. If the route is accessible a wheelchair icon may be useful to some people.

2) Waymarkers - these posts provide reminders similar to trailblazers on highways, placed along a route to mark changes in direction or provide intermediate

beacons where a sign is not necessary. They should be provided at any intersection of routes or changes in elevation where an obvious route cannot be seen. Waymarkers can be coded with coloured marks or symbols.


In addition, two other elements may be included:

3) Where vandalism is a problem orientation may be provided in other ways than direction signs. Compass paving stones can be used, set into the surface of paved trail intersections, or adapted waymarkers with the compass directions routed into the surfaces.

4) At the trail head of the parkland trails map stand installations in natural materials can provide scope for maps and interpretive information. Examples of these are already in use on the Nicomekl River floodplain. Deterrence to abuse can be increased by siting these stands within sight of residences or close to street lighting.



Key

 Designated trail and sidewalk links to Downtown from the southern neighbourhoods



Illustrative examples of trail directional blades, simple coded waymarkers and engraved compass paving stones all in natural materials.



2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the City

Summary guide sign typology

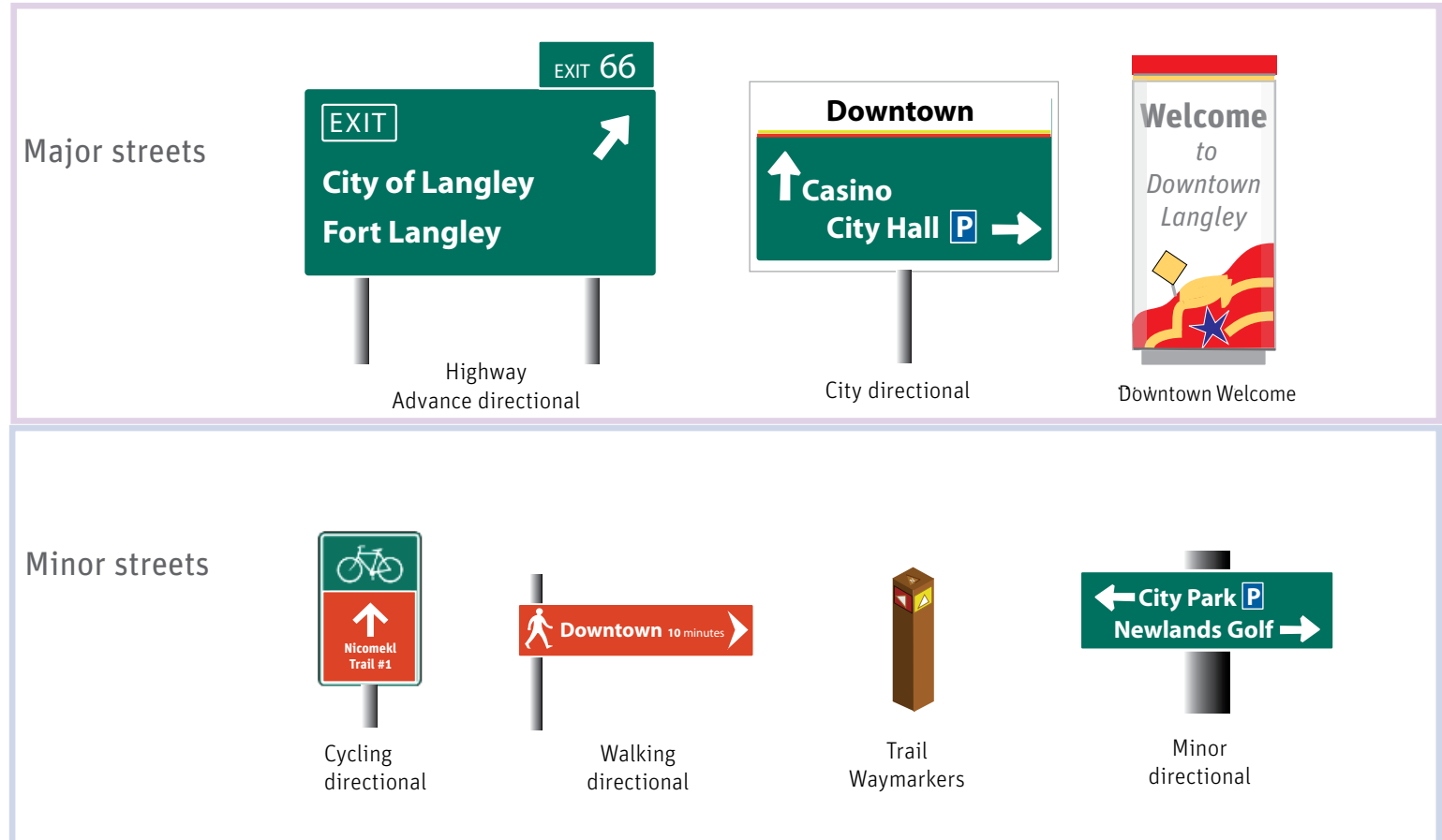
The preceding sections have described various types of information to guide drivers, cyclists and walkers and connect the city externally and internally.

Vehicular guide signs would conform to the BC Ministry of Transport Manual of Standard Traffic Signs (MoST). An application for a custom sign could be made for City directional signs to include a header bar that could indicate the neighbourhood in which the driver is moving through.

The existing City pylon could be reused as a marker and welcome gateway element for the Downtown area.

Other signs for cycling and walking may be provided some greater freedoms to include branding and local names.

The detailed design of the sign typology, specific sign schedule and any custom approvals would be an implementation project.



2. Recommendations

2.1 Connect the city

Transit - Passenger information

Many people visit the City by bus. As well as local shoppers, Kwantlen University students arrive and leave the Grove Road campus in significant numbers at the Langley Centre exchange.

Plans to upgrade the exchange to an integrated transit hub with inter-urban rail, street cars and buses are a major element of the Downtown Master Plan and should lead to a jump in transit usage.

Passenger information is the responsibility of TransLink the Metro Vancouver Transportation Authority. Improving passenger information at bus stops and the exchange is an important consideration but one that cannot be delivered by the City alone.

TransLink is starting to roll out new standards of bus information with Coast Mountain Bus Company but the timetable for improvements in the City of Langley are not yet confirmed.

Images (right) show options for TransLink bus stop ID signs designed to provide additional presence and information for passengers.



2. Recommendations

2.2 Create a welcome

Once visitors have arrived in the City they will go through a transition from their vehicle or bus. They may unfamiliar with the area and require orientation as well as information about what is available, the scale of the immediate area and the options they have for getting around.

For residents, there may not be a transition if they cycle or walk but these modes, being physical, require detailed information that encourages and provides confidence that they are welcome.

We have divided this section into three aspects of creating a welcome:

City Map - A new map designed specifically for the City of Langley to meet established needs.

Exploring Downtown - Engaging information that helps people orientate themselves upon arrival, promotes Downtown and encourages people to walk or bike around the core areas confidently that they will not get lost.

One voice - Ensuring that information is recognisable to generate trust and related to the City by reflecting The Place to Be brand.

2. Recommendations

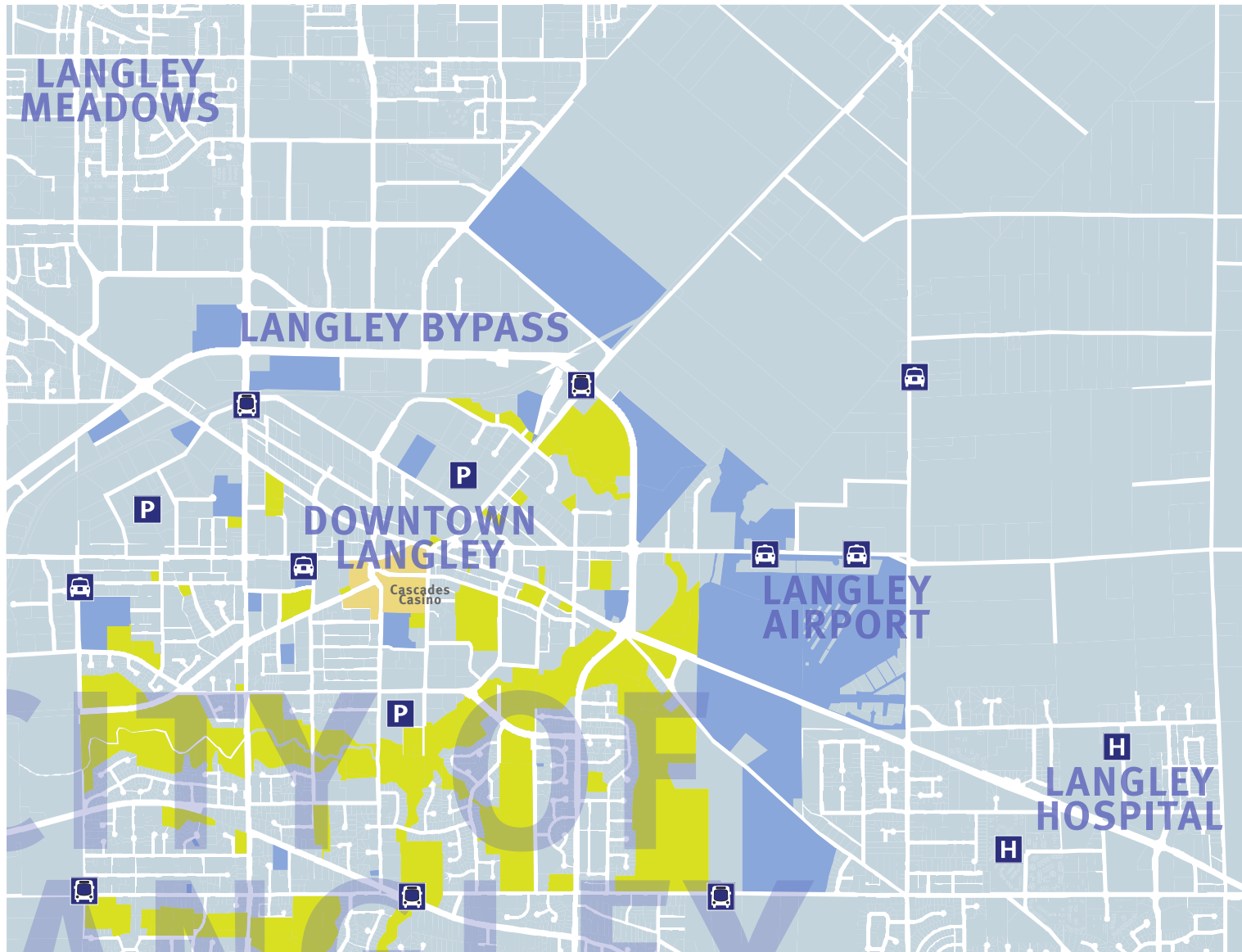
2.2 Create a welcome

City map

A City map should be commissioned that achieves a number of design objectives:

- a) Places the City of Langley correctly in the centre of the social and geographical context of the region.
- b) Names the key attractions and parking places
- c) Provides a grid and legend to help people plan trips
- d) Drawn at a scale suitable for walking as an inset if necessary and ideally with a walk time scale
- e) Provides information on transit options and walk, bike paths into the City
- f) Is designed in such a way that it may be reproduced as a recognizable family in print, on line, in kiosks and potentially as special editions (for instance a Langley Cruise, Christmas, nightlife version)

The map should be provided to businesses and all public buildings for distribution or display.



2. Recommendations

2.2 Create a welcome

City map design considerations

These are examples of different styles of maps used to represent the particular character and interests of cities.

Each one is unique but all have been designed with the user at the centre and as part of a family of information items and media.

It is recommended that a Downtown map is designed as an inset of a City of Langley map and eventually as a stand alone map to specifically encourage walking around the new Downtown.



2. Recommendations

2.2 Create a welcome

Exploring Downtown - walkable city

Downtown businesses rely on people walking in to shop and buy services. A Walkable City, is a viable and vital place.

Cities are complex areas with many destinations and options for visitors. Walking is best supported by maps that can convey a richness of information in an accessible and intuitive way.

Our recommendation is to develop a set of map based information signs using the new City map as a system. These would be located at decision points defined by walking desire lines.

Transport assessment suggests three levels of walking link which we have applied to the Downtown area.

Primary routes connect main arrival points and form the major pedestrian corridors.

Secondary routes connect the primary routes to local destinations

Tertiary routes provide external connections and shortcuts but may be less accessible or legible than secondary routes.

The preliminary location of signs is shown right and described below

The design concepts for these signs are shown on the next page.

Proposed City gateway locations (see plan on previous page)

Sign type	Proposed
Welcome map sign	3 signs (Innes Corners, McBurney Lane and City Hall)
Planning map sign	4 signs
Arrival map posters	6 poster signs
Blade signs	8 blade poles and signs



2. Recommendations

2.2 Create a welcome

Exploring Downtown - Sign typology

The concept for Downtown walking signage consists of four elements.

1) The welcome map stand is offers full view of the Downtown and could include interpretive information and may be used to in heritage areas such as Innes Corners.

2) Planner map show smaller areas, of 3-5minutes walk across. They would be used at decision points within the Downtown core. A slim pylon design is both contemporary and efficient in a busy urban setting.

3. Blade signs are traditional directional indicators and have a place to indicate destinations that are not easily seen from main steets.

4. Arrival maps would be poster map cases either wall mounted or freestanding and used at parking lots or transit nodes to orientate visitors.

Examples given here are from our projects for other clients and focus particularly on the successful 'Citylith' design.



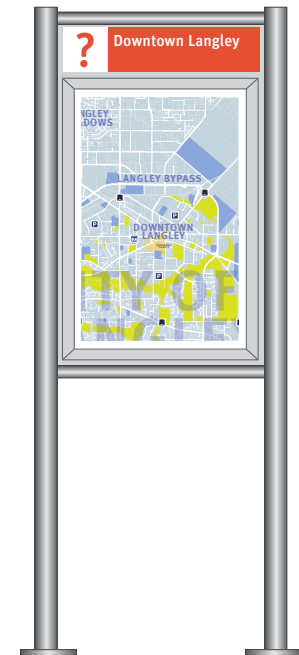
1. Welcome



2.Planning



3.Blade sign



4. Arrival poster

2. Recommendations

2.2 Create a welcome

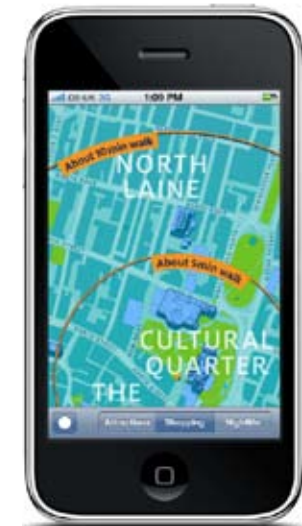
One voice

All new information provided under the wayfinding strategy should be governed by a set of standards that prescribe nomenclature, typography, iconography and graphic language.

The style adopted should complement the City brand to build upon the trust it generates amongst users.

The design standard will provide a brief to designers retained for implementation of specific elements over time. The standard should be flexible enough to allow for multi-media applications.

Complementing the strategy, the standard will also help developers understand the way in which the City intends to improve legibility.



2. Recommendations

2.3 Design development

In the preceding sections we have described a wide-ranging set of ideas to support wayfinding by different users. Implementing this strategy is a considerable undertaking in terms of detailed planning but also in respect of ongoing management and governance. Consistency is a critical success factor with public information and requires the creation of standards and processes to control how projects are implemented.

Acknowledging that the City is in a period of major change some of the projects implied by the recommendations may be reliant on other things happening first or be subject to change. Establishing standards is a means to retain consistency during change.

It is also important that the wayfinding system properly complements other city policies. Public information is an investment and can support promotional campaigns, help the City adapt to change and become an important part of brand identity.

The following section considers four issues:

Information planning - Preliminary detailed design tasks necessary for properly structured information.

Design guidance - Ensuring the wayfinding strategy is delivered consistently.

Cross-selling - Working with other local destinations to highlight the wider offer of the area.

Integration - Using the wayfinding system to support other objectives.

2. Recommendations

2.3 Design development

Information planning - Name the place

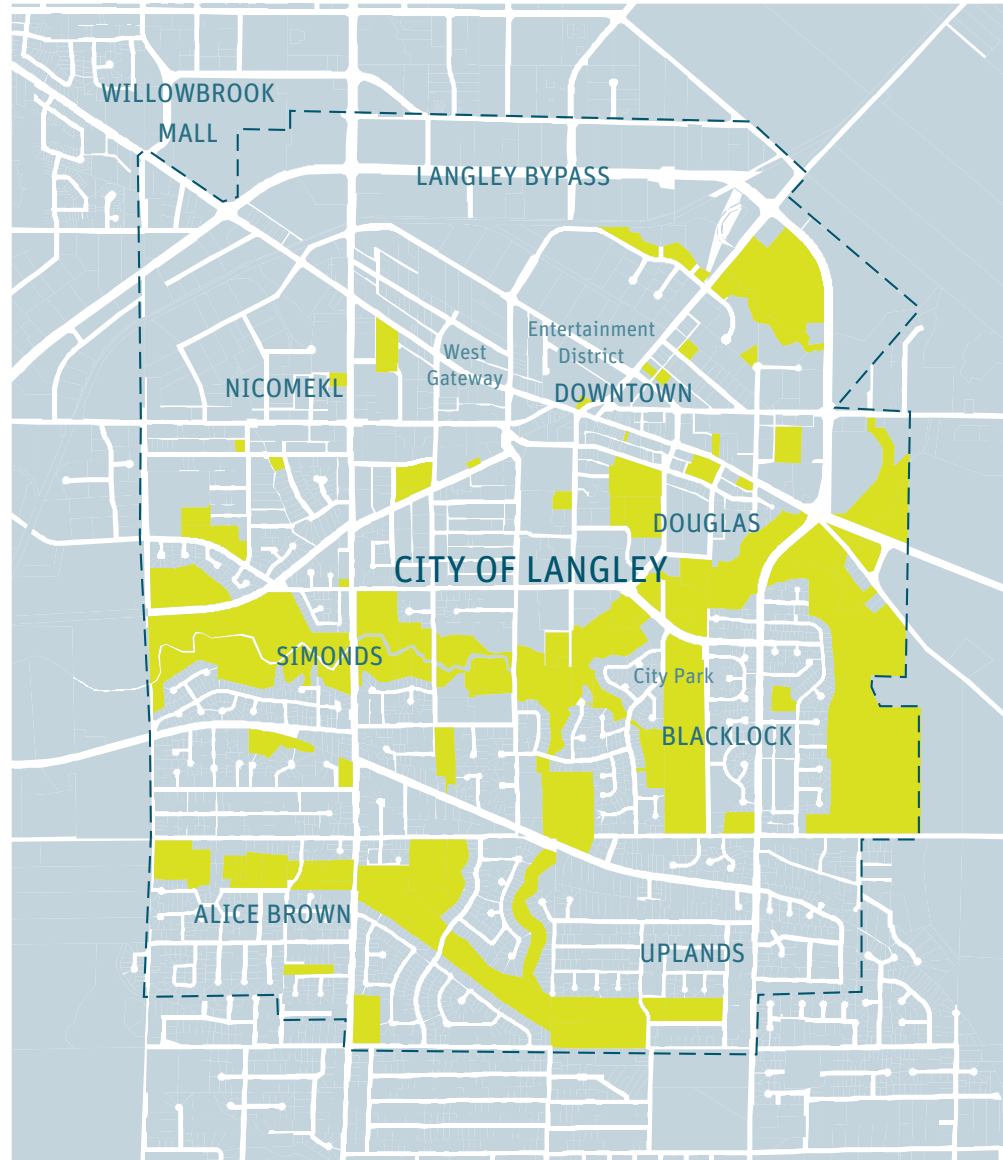
A key part of the wayfinding strategy is naming. Names are used as shorthand to describe places and need to be consistently spelled, written and used.

Place naming hierarchies are used in addressing systems, which help with progressive disclosure on maps and signs and provide stepping stones in journey descriptions.

It is important to note that not all areas have place names at all levels. The key to a successful application of place names is to recognise what is generally used and to fill gaps where doing so would add to people's understanding of the City.

Within the context of this strategy, the highest naming level would be "City of Langley", which should be used consistently to identify the area within the administrative boundary.

At the next levels consistent names should be agreed for the neighbourhoods and smaller areas, down to important destinations, such as car park names. Names should ideally provide an immediate understanding of what people can expect, such as 'Main Street' can convey a traditional sense of the centre, where a visitor can find a range of independent stores and services and might be appropriate for the downtown core.



2. Recommendations

2.3 Design development

Information planning - Naming hierarchy

We recommend a naming workshop where key stakeholders can define the naming hierarchy and identify place names. Applied would set out a possible naming structure in the form of alternative place names, and their place in a hierarchy, overlaid on a map base.

The key attractions that provide orientation in the City, such as the casino and convention centre, City Hall and library, also form part of the naming system and would be included for discussion.

Place names would be agreed before being used throughout the wayfinding architecture including guide signs, all directional information and mapping.

This would be undertaken in a structured way, supporting and being supported by wayfinding principles – progressive disclosure, predictability, consistency, seamless journey and don't make me think.

City	Neighbourhood	Precinct	Name
Type: <i>Primary directions</i>	<i>Spatial cognition</i>	<i>Secondary directions</i>	<i>Tertiary directions</i>
Use: Arterial Street Signs	Mapping	Minor Street Signs	Directions where entrances are not visible from street
City of Langley	Willowbrook Mall		
	Downtown	Main Street West Gateway Entertainment district	Cascades City Hall
	Blacklock	City Park	Music School Al Anderson Pool
	Nicomekl		
	Douglas		
	Uplands		
	Simonds		
	Alice Brown		

Example structure of a naming hierarchy

2. Recommendations

2.3 Design development

Information planning - Management

The naming and asset register is one example of the behind-the-scenes development and capacity that must be established to maintain a wayfinding system.

Other aspects relate to the increasing expectation for information to be available across media. In the case of wayfinding this relates to the potential for maps to be available in print, on street, on line and in mobile applications.

Many cities and transit authorities invest considerable effort and money in developing websites, mapping, branding and infrastructure without a level of co-ordination between them that would optimise their effectiveness.

While the challenges should not be under-estimated, a fully integrated approach to information design spanning all media will present the highest quality of consistency and outreach.

While the City of Langley may not yet be ready to follow this route, there is no doubt that the advent of social media, mobile information systems and branding are increasingly relevant to destination cities in the same way that they have been for some time for private businesses.

Sophisticated multi-media information systems are increasingly available and attractive, but can represent a significant investment in data management for the owner.



2. Recommendations

2.3 Design development

Design guidance

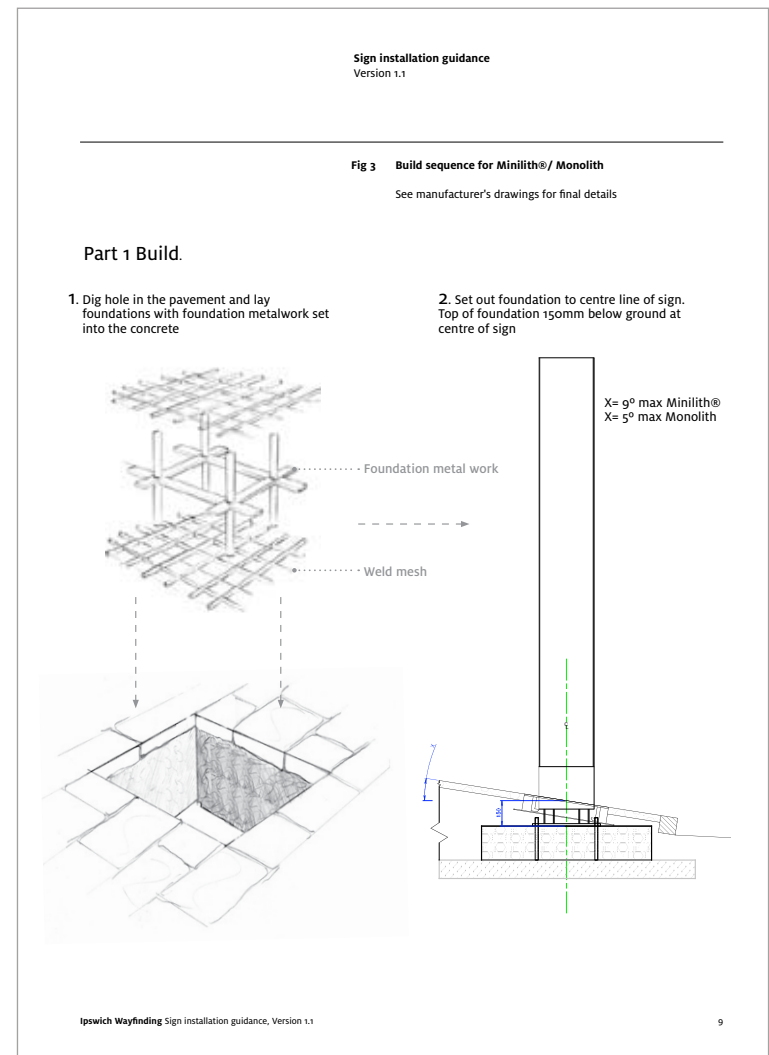
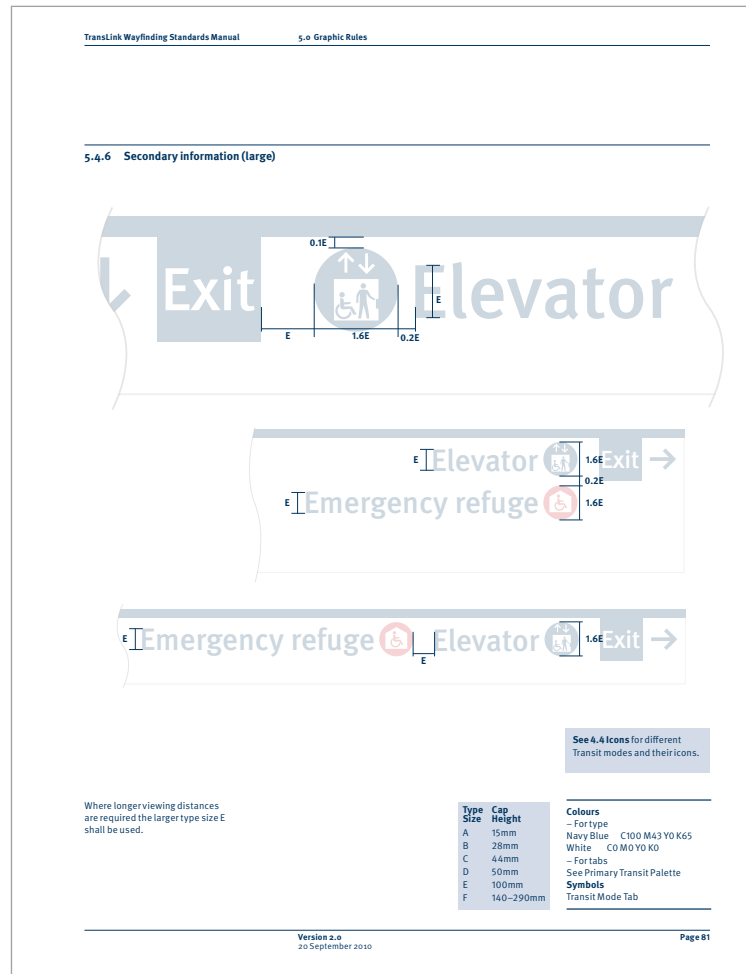
The strategy describes a set of pieces that work together to provide consistent, reliable and continuous wayfinding for visitors and residents. To convert the strategy and concepts into the tools necessary to produce the items requires the creation of design guidelines.

Design guidance is a detailed stage of development that would consider a range of inputs such as the City brand, sign regulations, and accessibility.

Typically design guides are documents that evolve over time, being reviewed and updated as new circumstances demand or as refinements are developed.

Design guides can cover planning, graphic rules, sign specification, materials and sign shop drawings.

Illustrated here are examples of sign graphic specifications (for TransLink) and Citylith map stand foundation design (Ipswich, UK).



2. Recommendations

2.3 Design development

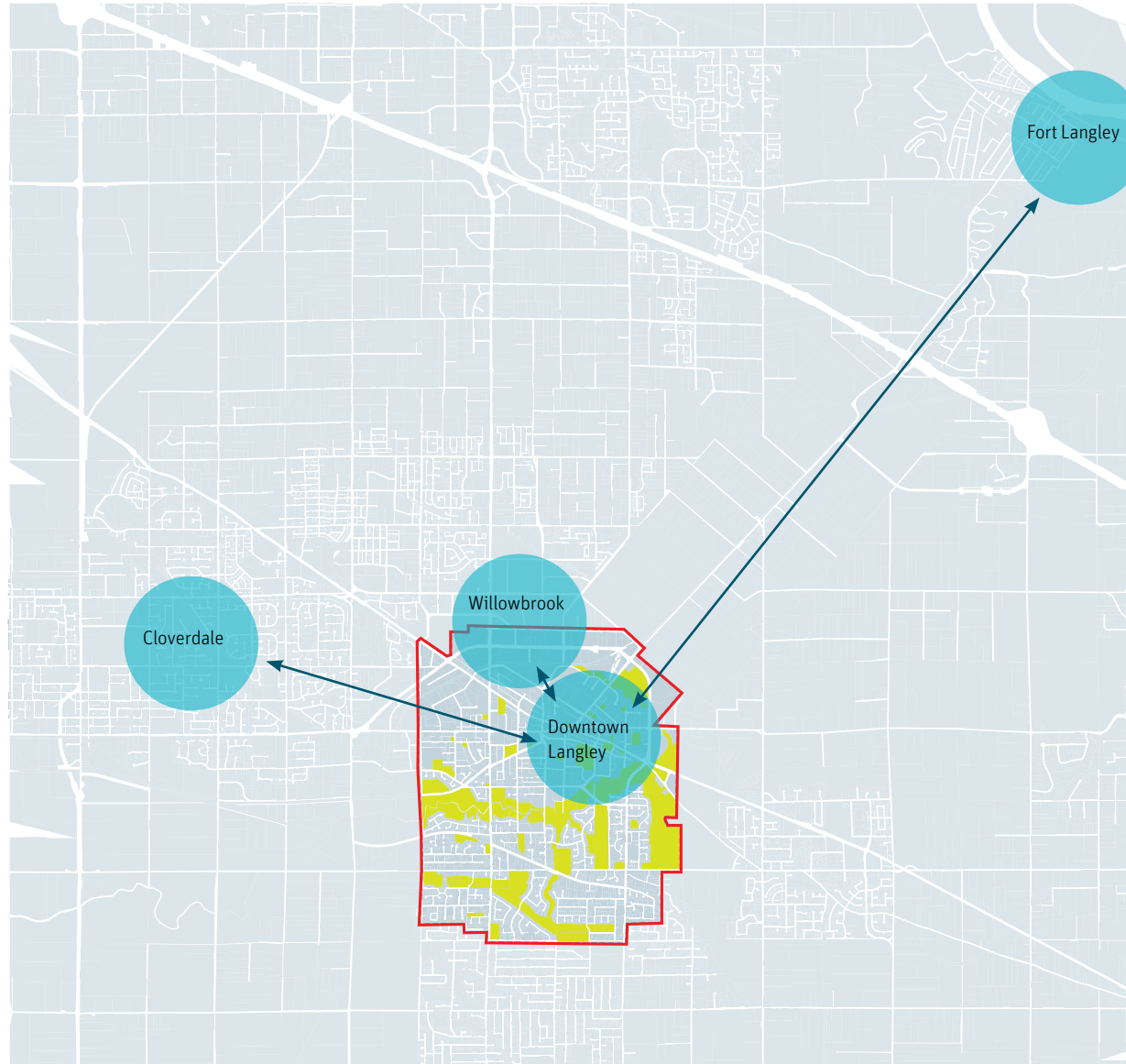
Cross-selling

Downtown Langley has a specific offer that is different and complementary to the chain stores, big box shopping and heritage tourism offer that exists already.

The Downtown Master Plan will only heighten the distinctiveness of this part of the City of Langley.

Raising the profile and awareness of Downtown Langley need not be at the expense of the existing centres and could be promoted as a regional offering, with mutual benefits to all concerned.

Part of the way this could be developed would be to share information about specific attractions and events in each of the complementary centres.



2. Recommendations

2.3 Design development

Integration - Active travel promotion

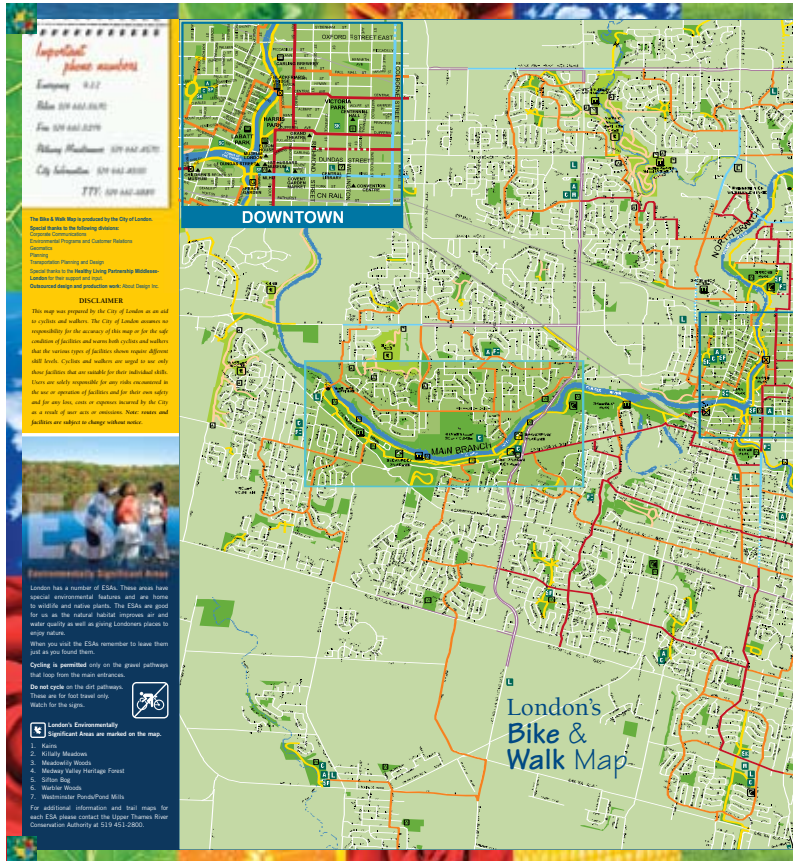
Signs identifying walking and cycling routes for local travel around the City would not in themselves achieve a promotional effect.

However the signed networks could become part of a travel demand management (TDM) initiative along with physical improvements and removal of barriers to walking and cycling.

Elements of the initiative could include:

- Maps showing walk and bike routes that link places as well as those that provide leisure attractions or are accessible to people with disabilities;
- Organised walking and cycling activities such as walk to school programs, bike skills and safety training and cycle to work buddies.
- Links to suitable events where the networks could be used to highlight them to a wider audience.

Work with local resident associations or advocacy groups for the environment, cycling or heritage may provide other ways to promote these 'active travel arteries' maintaining momentum as habits change.



Section of an Bike and Walk map produced by the City of London, ON



2. Recommendations

2.3 Design development

Integration - Construction signage

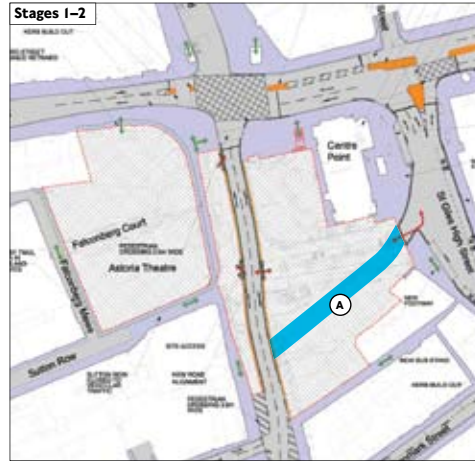
The wayfinding strategy is only one part of a planning process anticipating dramatic changes in population, commercial enterprises, built development and visitor activity. What is appropriate and important now will not be the same as what is critical when the Downtown Master Plan moves into implementation phases.

To avoid waste, it is important that the wayfinding strategy provides solid building blocks that can be added to seamlessly over time addressing needs as they become relevant.

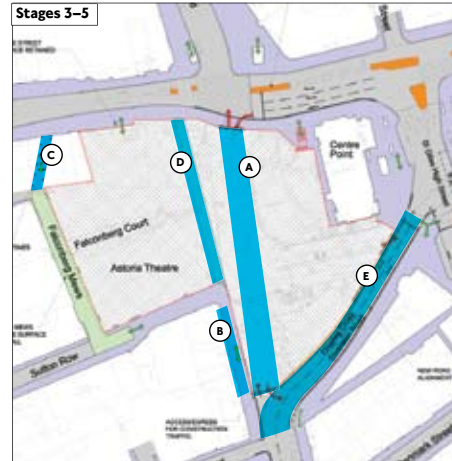
The strategy must also be adaptable so that priorities can be changed as necessary.

A process by which the value of wayfinding is supported by user response and elements are refined by piloting would help cement wayfinding as a core element of the development plan.

A further aspect of adaptability is to consider the use of wayfinding during construction. Disruption due to construction is inevitable and road closures sometimes necessary. Construction wayfinding can provide information about detours, alternative facilities, such as parking and maintain access to businesses.



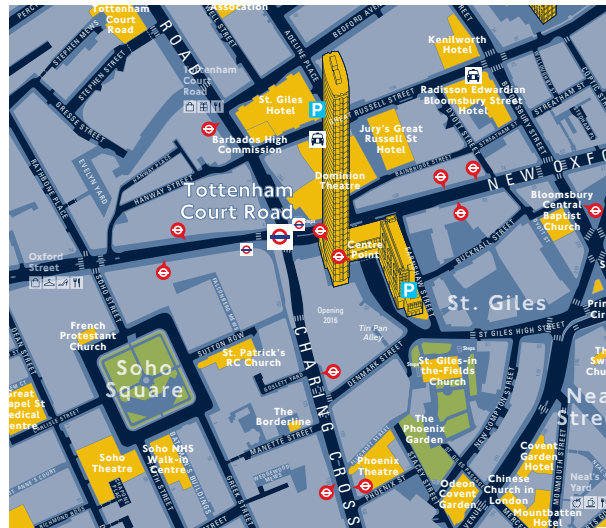
Stages 1-2
2009-2010 (Current)
A Andrew Borde Street closed



Stage 6
2010-2016
A Charing Cross Road closed north of Denmark Street
B Pavement remains open with access to Sutton Row (temporarily pedestrianised)
C Temporary pedestrian cut-through from Falconberg Mews to Oxford St
D Potential temporary pedestrian through route (TBC)
E Charing Cross diversion road alternative pedestrian route



Stage 3-5
2016
A Temporary Falconberg Mews cut-through closed
B Charing Cross Road re-opened
C New pedestrianised area around new tube exits
● Proposed sign locations for installation in 2016. Positioning of signs at key arrival points will be crucial to the surrounding scheme once the works are complete. Precise locations should be reconsidered once final plans are confirmed.



Adapting mapping and sign locations for stages of development at Tottenham Court Road station in London.

2. Recommendations

2.4 Project planning

The previous section set out recommendations and guidance for the various elements of a multi-modal wayfinding strategy. This section goes on to describe a program for implementing the recommendations together with indicative costs, priorities and considerations.

It is important to state that while consistency and continuity are important aspects of effective information, it is equally important that the system of information is effectively delivered and the promoting authority is ready both for the investment but also the accompanying preparatory and maintenance commitments that good public information requires.

The following section describes the three year plan in terms of specific projects followed by a discussion on options for program assembly, including an outline budget.

2. Recommendations

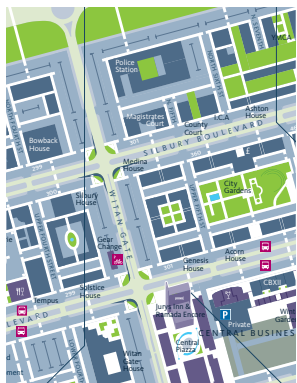
2.4 Three year plan

Project plan overview

<i>Phase A</i>	<i>Phase B projects</i>	<i>Phase C projects</i>	<i>Phase D projects</i>
<i>WAYFINDING STRATEGY</i> Approval	<i>PROJECT 1</i> City map	<i>PROJECT 4</i> Downtown orientation	
	<i>PROJECT 2</i> City directions	<i>PROJECT 5</i> Cycling network	
	<i>PROJECT 3</i> Highway signage	<i>PROJECT 6</i> Walking network	<i>PROJECT 8</i> City gateways
		<i>PROJECT 7</i> Construction signage	<i>PROJECT 9</i> Exploring Downtown
			<i>PROJECT 10</i> Transit passenger information
2011	2012	2013	2014

2. Recommendations

2.4 Three year plan

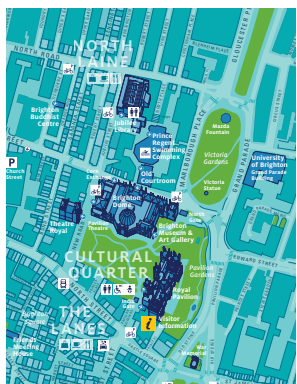


We envisage a multi-modal signage strategy for Langley, which can be taken forward with the following projects.

Phase A Projects

Approval of wayfinding strategy:

- Agree that the strategy and recommendations outlined in this document are the correct way forward for the project.
- Applied will provide Langley with an indication of costs.
- Applied will provide Langley with a phased implementation plan.
- Langley to acquire funding agreement.



Phase B Projects

Phase B projects should be implemented as soon as possible. They address the immediate needs of the City – those issues that arise from the idea of connecting the city and to answer the key questions:

1. Where am I?
2. Where is Downtown?
3. Where else can I go?

They recognise the key mode of travel in Langley (auto) and support a key objective of the City (tourism).

Project 1 – Creating a City Map

The City map is a concept for a representation of Downtown Langley based on the needs of access and walking in the Downtown.

A new City map is an important central asset that should achieve a number of design objectives:

- a) Places the City of Langley correctly in the centre of the social and geographical context of the region.
- b) Names the key attractions and parking places
- c) Provides a grid and legend to help people plan trips
- d) Is drawn at a scale suitable for walking as an inset if necessary and ideally with a walk time scale
- e) Provides information on transit options and walk, bike paths into the City
- f) Is designed in such a way that it may be reproduced as a recognizable family in print, on line, in kiosks and potentially as special editions (for instance a Langley Cruise, Christmas, nightlife version)

The map should be provided to businesses and all public buildings for distribution or display.

2. Recommendations

2.4 Three year plan

The creation of the map will require both a design exercise but also information planning. A critical component of this will be agreeing the names of areas, places and attractions. This is particularly the case as our research revealed considerable public confusion over the identity of the Downtown core as well as specific destinations.

We would recommend a facilitated planning process will allow stakeholders to agree and discuss names that can then be used to produce and maintain lasting mapping and directional information content.

Project 2 – City Directions

A system of guide signing for drivers is the first priority identified by the study.

There are two elements to guide signing recommended in the strategy; City Directions and Highway Signage.

City directions are contained within the City limits and mostly located on City roads. The local jurisdiction will help deliver this project from an engineering sense, although the agreement of any custom sign types with the BC MOT must be factored into any time line.

The elements of this project would include:

- Confirming sign locations and content schedule
- Developing detailed sign designs
- Applying for custom sign approval as necessary
- Assembling a traffic engineering implementation program with initial focus on Downtown circulation and further phases of work in the southern neighbourhoods.

Project 3 – Highway Signage

The City directional signs will help to simplify circulation in the City and highlight destinations to through traffic. The next element of guide signing would then be to negotiate changes and additions to signage in the Township and with the Ministry indicating major directions to the City.

The process for obtaining agreement to changes for naming consistency and new signs may be lengthy and for this reason this project should not be seen as a dependency on other wayfinding projects. It is however important that the City is named and given directions on the surrounding highway network to ensure it is properly recognised and connected.

2. Recommendations

2.4 Three year plan

Phase C Projects

Phase C projects should be implemented in the short term, within 1-2 years. They support core navigation around the City for sustainable modes, increase footfall in the Downtown area during change and address the following wayfinding priorities:

1. Can I park easily?
2. Can I bike or walk it?
3. Is it easy to get around?

Project 4 –Downtown Orientation

This project covers the aspects of the strategy that welcome people Downtown. There are three elements:

- Welcome thresholds - these would be located on three key entry routes to the Downtown core (Grove Road and East and West Fraser Highway). They would principally be aimed at drivers and could be a way to use the existing City pylons.
- Arrival maps - design or procurement of map stands for parking lots to provide parkers with orientation and to encourage 'park once and walk' behaviour.
- Transit 'Walking from Here' maps - in liaison with TransLink, install journey planning information at Langley Centre exchange including a walking from Here map.

All these projects require some planning and logically follow the guide signing and mapping projects in Phase B.

Project 5 – Cycling Network

In parallel with City plans for a bicycle network, a system of bicycle wayfinding should be developed and included in capital delivery. The bike wayfinding project would benefit from the naming and place identification actions agreed for the City map project in Phase B.

The timing of this project is dependent on the capital bike path network as infrastructure provision is yet to be widely developed other than for leisure cycling on trails. This information project may also be coordinated with plans for Travel Smart type projects to encourage residents to travel actively.

Project 6 – Walking Network

Directional signs to link the southern neighbourhoods with local destinations would provide a clearer view of accessibility and promote sustainable travel.

The transport plan has already identified a program of sidewalk work to encourage walking on major streets. To encourage residents to walk, we would recommend walkability assessments at the neighbourhood level where connectivity is not dictated by main road alignments but simple journeys and direct desire lines. An audit using 'ped shed' principles may provide a way to prioritise project delivery and identify gaps that would encourage local people to walk in addition to the essential provision of sidewalks elsewhere.

As with Project 5 Cycling Network, the implementation schedule for this project should be defined in terms of related capital investment in walking trails in order all relevant issues can be addressed efficiently and with maximum impact.

2. Recommendations

2.4 Three year plan

Project 7 - Construction signage

With the dramatic degree of change expected in the Downtown area, an important aspect of wayfinding need will relate to short term changes to driver, cycle and pedestrian routes. Interrupted journeys, delays due to streetworks and confusion due to street closures can frustrate visitors who then form a poor opinion of the place and authority.

Temporary construction signage designed to be recognizably part of the City wayfinding system but aimed at short term needs would communicate a sense of care and respect for visitors that will help retain business and loyalty through a prolonged period of building and change. This sort of attention is rare anywhere in the region and could mark the City out as a trailblazer.

It would be logical to consider this as part of a package of measures including 'Considerate contractor' agreements related to hours of working, noise, site management, City branded site hoardings and construction signage that would form part of current bylaws for building permits.

Phase D Projects

Phase D projects can be implemented in the longer term up to 3 years or more if related to development. They are projects which support the long term ambitions of the Downtown Master Plan and its associated development and infrastructural changes. They address the following wayfinding priorities:

4. Managing change
5. Your Downtown
6. Walkable Langley
7. Encouraging transit use

Project 8 - City Gateways

The major entrances to the Downtown core and civic precinct should be indicated with a statement that both welcomes and conveys a sense of arrival in a special place. These gateways may be architectural, sculptural or other forms of installation that would provide a landmark value and reduce the need for repetitive traffic signage to demarcate the one-way system. One approach could be to follow the conceptual lead established by the archway signs previously installed at Fenton Lane, Salt lane and McBurney Lane.

Initially there may be value in considering the use of banner thresholds to mark these gateway points. In parallel a Community Arts Funded project could be considered that would brief artists to develop unique installations at each of the City Gateway sites.

2. Recommendations

2.4 Three year plan

Project 9 - Exploring Downtown

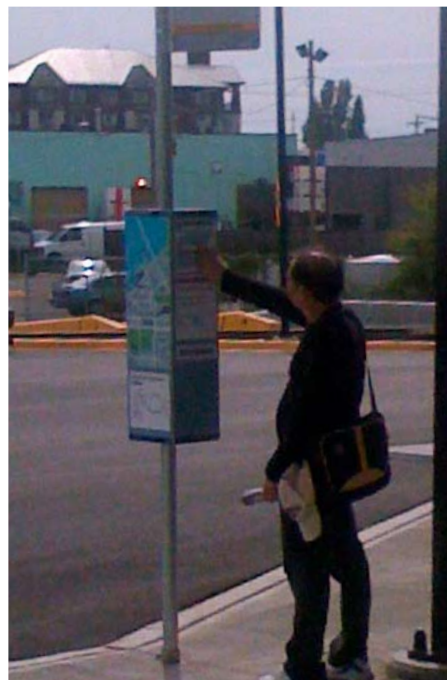
As the Downtown Core and master planned special design areas become established, the scope and benefits of high quality walking wayfinding signage will increase.

The suggested typology recommends map-based signs that may be custom designed to present a high quality addition to the remodelled Downtown area. A map-based approach to the information content will encourage exploration and provide an accessible and attractive part of the street scene within a compact area of the City.

Project 10 - Transit Passenger Information

A stated aim of the Master Transportation Plan is to ensure transit is a preferred mode of travel. The Downtown Master Plan proposes ambitious new services including reintroduction of inter-regional rail services and a shuttle. The planned relocation of the exchange offers the perfect platform for a major improvement in transit information quality.

As plans for the new facility develop the City wayfinding strategy and standards will be a useful way to ensure high quality information is provided for passengers that can be directly integrated with information in the City. This planned integration will provide the best chance of seamlessness which is a major function in encouraging transfer from car driving to transit use.



TransLink bus stop specific timetable 'InfoCube'- Bridgeport Canada Line Station, Richmond.



PID trial - #3 bus route, Downtown Vancouver

2. Recommendations

2.4 Program assembly

Scope

It is expected that the projects described in the strategy could be delivered in three years alongside the ongoing development of the Downtown Master Plan. It is important to the City that the wayfinding information not only helps visitors but also provides value to residents.

The priorities for the strategy relate to achieving immediate improvement in terms of driver awareness and guidance, while broader aims to encourage residents to walk or bike and to better communicate the identity of the City and its Downtown follow.

As a strategy this study does not provide the necessary detail to allow implementation to follow directly and a number of prior steps have been discussed.

Design Standards

A project to prepare design standards would take the strategy and create all the rules and detailed designs under which signs and information could be designed consistently by manufacturers. The standards would include:

- Visual language - typefaces, colours, icons and graphics elements of all signs in the system
- Naming and asset register - researching and collating the input of stakeholders to define the core content for directional and mapping information
- Graphic rules - specifications for sign layout and mapping
- Product specifications - designs for customised elements and specifications for standard items

The Design Standard would be the core document for procurement or manufacturers and project implementation.

Dependencies

The wayfinding strategy is prepared at a time of significant growth and change in the City and what may be correct today may change significantly in a short time. The cost of changing information must be weighed against the likelihood and scale of possible change.

For this reason we have recommended that wayfinding in the Downtown area while attractive, is a later project. This allows for these higher cost items to be introduced at a point when the Master Plan is well-established and there is greater certainty about the timing of elements such as the building of parkades, Prairie Station and the Children's Museum.

By contrast elements such as a City map and driver guide signing, that are relatively unaffected by small-scale change and less costly overall, should be developed immediately with the relevant authorities.

There are also a number of projects dependent on other City Council programs for cost-efficiency and relevance. The cycling and walking network signage projects are recommended to be planned as part of infrastructure works programs rather than stand alone initiatives both to allow them to be procured efficiently but also to improve the impact of the information to encourage these under-represented modes of transport.

Similarly, any transit project is almost entirely reliant on a collaborative approach with TransLink who have their own investment plans and priorities.

A detailed project assembly exercise would consider all these dimensions and risks and refine the strategy.

2. Recommendations

2.4 Program assembly - outline budget

Budgeting

The figures indicated in the table are broad order of cost estimates. They are included to guide budget planning only and further work would be necessary to define specific projects.

Using these general figures we would suggest an overall capital cost in the region of \$600,000 over the period. Sources of funding for the project may be drawn from a variety of sources but with a likely focus on City Engineering. Other sources may include the Community Amenity Fund, Downtown Businesses and Public Arts Fund.

Acknowledging the potential to refine project scope, especially in the later years and to draw in external funding, we would recommend consideration being given to a budget profile as follows:

Year 1 \$130,000

Year 2 \$150,000

Year 3 \$300,000

Total \$580,000

Project	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Comments
1 City Map	\$45,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	Costs in Year 1 include mastering as artworks. Those in Year 2 assume a digitisation for management and other media. Costs in Year 3 assume Downtown wayfinding require new map formats and content review for signs
2. City directions	\$20,000		\$100,000	Year 3 assumes the potential for dynamic signs related to parkade developments which may contribute under Community Amenity Charging
3. Highway signage	\$25,000			Assumed average costs (projects 3 and 4) : advance directional \$1,000, directional \$500, name signs \$2,000.*
4. Downtown orientation		\$40,000		Cost dependent on reuse of existing City pylons for Welcome gateways
5. Cycling network		\$20,000		Budget allowance only - to be planned with Master Transportation Plan
6. Walking network		\$30,000		Budget allowance only - to be planned with Master Transportation Plan
7. Construction wayfinding		\$10,000		Assumes production of a set of temporary signs for City use and design guide for temporary wayfinding for implementation by contractors and developers
8. City gateways	\$10,000		\$150,000	Year 1 is an allowance for banners. Year 3 assumes an indicative budget for unique artwork commissioned by the City in collaboration with the City Arts Advisory Committee
9. Explore Downtown			\$125,000	Assumes custom design map and directional signs based on high quality materials (vitreous enamel and stainless steel)
10. Transit information			\$0	Assumes City able to negotiate improvement with TransLink as part of Prairie Station.
Indicative capital sub-totals	\$100,000	\$120,000	\$400,000	Higher value included where there is a range
Project costs	\$30,000	\$36,000	\$120,000*	Estimated at 30% to includes professional fees for preparation of Design Standard and design specification of procurement of manufacture as necessary.
Operational provision	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	Guide sums for internal data management, systems and communications to manage and maintain wayfinding information.

2. Recommendations

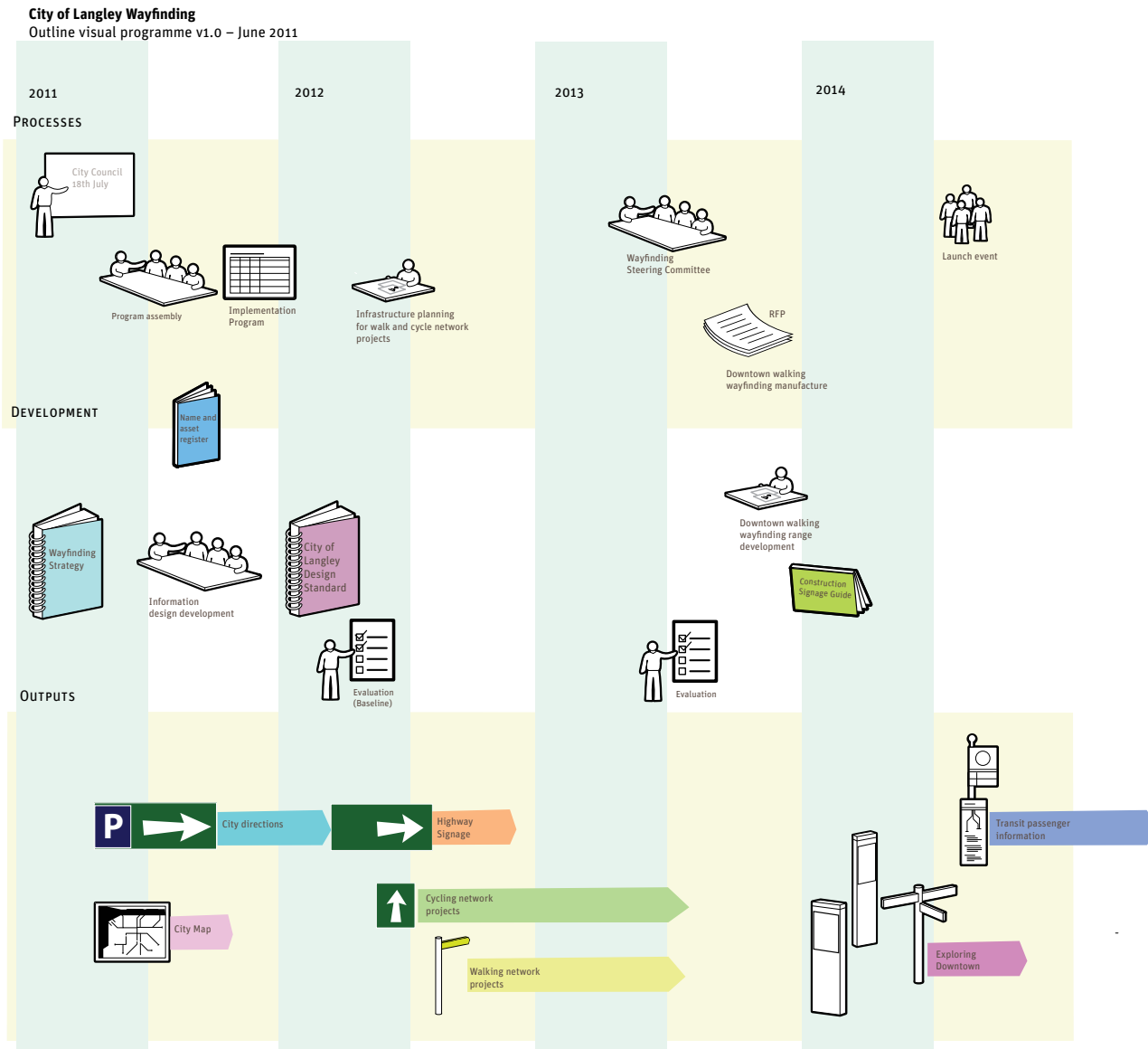
2.4 Program assembly

Scheduling

The implementation of the projects will in some cases be highly dependent on other factors. This schedule is hence an illustration of the relationship between projects rather than an expected program.

Within this visual program we have indicated a process of evaluation that will allow refinement of the approach and designs before entering a procurement process for Downtown wayfinding sign commission. This is a prudent exercise to ensure the approach is valid and effective particularly in a changing environment.

We have also indicated transit information as a project that may extend beyond the three year project window. This recognises the difficulty in forecasting the position of TransLink and Provincial funding for Prairie Station. It is therefore viewed as an additional benefit from the majority of the city wayfinding project which could be launched within three years.



3.0 Review

This section describes the research, surveys and discussions that were undertaken.

Understanding the current provision of signage, directions and interpretive information is important as it helps determine good practice, gaps in information and problems that may need a more complex solution than signage alone.

3. Review

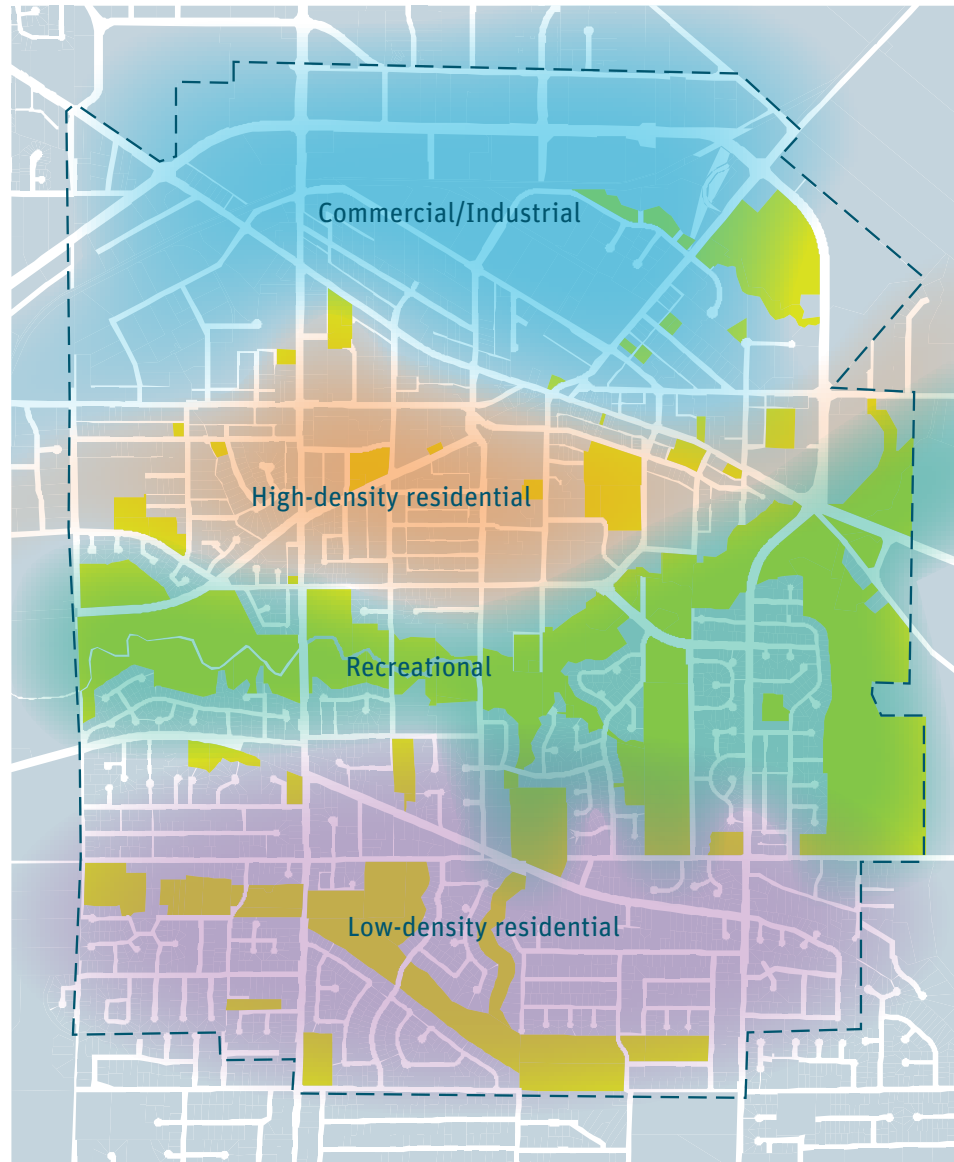
3.1 Observations

With a population of 26,000, the City of Langley is one of the least populated municipalities in Metro Vancouver. However, because of its compact size, it is one of the most densely populated. At over 2,500 people per square kilometre the City is the fifth most dense behind the Cities of Vancouver, New Westminster, North Vancouver and White Rock.

The City has a number of clearly defined zones. The Nicomekl River and floodplain runs east-west dividing the City into two sections: to the south lies single family, low-density neighbourhoods, while to the north there is a high-density residential zone beyond which lies a commercial-industrial area centred on the Fraser Highway and Langley Bypass.

There are a number of major highways that radiate away from the centre of the City, and major railway infrastructure that also splits the City.

The City is bounded on three sides by the Township of Langley and on its western side by the City of Surrey.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Downtown Core

The Downtown Core is centred on a short section of the Fraser Highway between 204 and 206 Streets.

It is known by a number of different names including Fraser Highway, Main Street, High Street, Old Langley, Langley, Langley City, Downtown Langley, Downtown Core, City Centre, McBurney Plaza as well as “the one-way bit of the Fraser Highway where the stores are”.

It is distinctive in that it is a one-way section of roadway with angled parking. The road has been traffic-calmed with curb bulges that restrict the road width, protecting parking, reducing crossing distances for pedestrians and providing landscaping.

It also has a number of gateway arches that front the street at its side road junctions with Salt Lane, Fenton Lane and McBurney Lane, although there is no such marker at the main vehicular entrance from the west at Glover Road.

The shops in the Downtown Core that front the Fraser Highway are distinctly boutique: non-chain and local independent stores, and create a different feel to much of Langley and indeed Metro Vancouver.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Downtown Langley

While the downtown core provides a pedestrian-oriented shopping opportunity, other adjacent areas offer other attractions.

The Cascades Casino Coast Hotel & Convention Centre is an important asset to the City offering an entertainment venue and business accommodation for a broad audience. It is located on the opposite side of the historic Innes Corners from the downtown core and guests could be encouraged to explore the City from this base as well as using it as a point from which to drive further afield.

City Hall is located in a relatively new building including the City library and close to other civic amenities. City Hall is planned to become the focus of a new civic precinct to the west of the downtown core linking a revived Langley Mall with the City centre.

The downtown area is also a few steps away amenities including from Douglas Recreation Centre and Douglas Park. The closeness of these attractive assets is not apparent from the downtown and its busy arterial streets. However Douglas Park signifies the importance of the green belt created by the Nicomekl River floodplains that separate the City into its northern and southern communities.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Open spaces

The City of Langley has a network of formal and informal open, green spaces.

The Nicomekl Park, which straddles the Nicomekl River and divides the City. It has a natural, wilderness appeal, with slopes leading down to the meandering river. There are trails that cross or follow the river providing leisure walks and connections. Some of these routes are steep or unpaved and not necessarily easily used in all weathers. The existence of the river and park also affects the street structure in the area resulting in cul-de-sacs and bridge crossings.

The city lists sixteen parks in its publications and while Nicomekl is the largest and most influential, City Park, Douglas Park and Sendall Gardens particularly offer a range of attractions and facilities generating visits from beyond local residents alone.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Commercial-Industrial Zone

The northern fringe of the City is home to a number of big box developments and industrial areas along the Fraser Highway, 200th Street and Langley Bypass (Highway 10) corridors.

These areas are characterised by vehicle access needs whether for freight movement, servicing or public parking. The spread of these commercial land uses extends continuously across the City boundaries.

Willowbrook Shopping Centre is located straddling the boundary between the City and Township of Langley on Fraser Highway at the Langley Bypass. It is a major destination just a few minutes drive from Downtown Langley and offers over 2,000 free parking spaces and dozens of stores including the popular anchors The Bay, Sears, Zellers, Toys 'R' Us and Sport Chek.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Southern neighbourhoods

South of 56th Avenue, the City of Langley changes in character from the commercial and higher density northern neighbourhoods through floodplain parkland and into a leafy and attractive network of residential streets.

This southern area is characterised by single family dwellings in small cul-de-sacs or quiet streets, interspersed by parks and leisure facilities. Many of the cul-de-sacs are linked by walkways, some of which lead to trails heading north through Nicomekl Park.

There is obvious pride in this high quality environment and it provides a stark contrast to the more densely active and trafficked areas north of the Downtown core.

The southern part of the City is divided into four neighbourhoods; Simonds, Blacklock, Alice Brown and Uplands. Each is focused on a local school recognising them as a key component of community life.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Gateways and markers

Arrival in a city is often marked by something memorable, such as crossing a bridge or a change from low rise residential to larger commercial buildings. It is at this point that travellers will begin to prepare to stop, disembark and become pedestrians. Arrival is hence an important point for information and identity.

The City of Langley jurisdictional limits are marked on most major routes using pylon structures installed in the early 1990's. However these administrative boundaries hold little physical relevance to visitors to the attractions of Downtown. They are also not always located with the best sightlines for incoming drivers and can be easily missed.

Arrival in the Downtown area is not well-defined. This is mainly because there is no significant change in built form or character from the surrounding area.

However, street banners do provide a useful sense of civic identity and their contribution to a sense of place could be heightened with stronger thresholds.

On Fraser Highway east of Downtown, an older welcome sign exists from the mid-1980's. This sign style is also seen at Innes Corners. These signs are more striking in terms of shape but the dark colours tend to recede into the background



3.1 Observations

Driver Signage

Two sample journeys into the City have been used to illustrate observations about existing driver signage.

1) Glover Road from the North

Of note:

The City of Langley is identified in a variety of regulatory and promotional signage on the way into town.

Well-designed banners (ref 7) mark the way into downtown from the welcome pylons (ref 6).

Close to Logan Avenue a shared pedestrian/ biking path is provided along Glover Road (ref 8).

At the corner of Logan and Glover 'The Station' sculpture marks the entry to Downtown close to the current Langley Centre transit exchange (ref 9)



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Driver Signage

1) Fraser Highway from the West

Of note:

A small bike path sign marks a designated route along Fraser Highway (ref 3).

Fraser Highway's heritage status is commemorated with a trail marker (ref 6).

The recent Paddington Station development includes a welcome to Downtown sign (ref 8), located at a relatively low level within an attractive corner feature.

As before, the signs represent a mix of owners, styles, formats and terminology which while mostly well-executed individually, collectively create visual discordancy.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Signage for walking and biking

The majority of signage for walking or biking is standard and regulatory. Few signs provide destination information, with the exception of the Fraser Highway bike designated path that passes through the City.

Street name signs are well-provided and offer the usual security of intersection identification.

Signs to guide walking are limited to trail markers for the Nicomekl River network. On the network itself some effort has also been made to provide interpretive public information but much of this has been vandalised.

Within the City core, a large mural map has been installed. While this provides a fun view of Downtown its value as a piece of information is limited.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

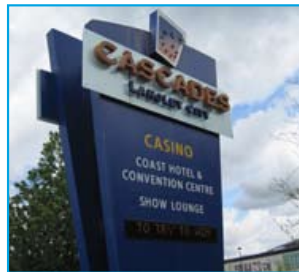
Downtown signage audit

A survey of signage was conducted to record the locations of any pole mounted sign and other signage or features relevant to wayfinding information.

The number of pole-mounted regulatory signage was notable for the very few instances where signs were grouped. This led to a number of places with several poles in close proximity. In the Downtown core the number of A-board type sidewalk signs created some obstruction to easy passage.

The scale of private pylon signs was also notable as they create considerable visual impact compared to other information.

Very few examples of directional signage was found with only a small number of parking direction signs for Langley Mall and at 56th and Fraser Avenue. Only one sign that could be described as offering walking directions was found, at the intersection of Douglas Avenue and 204th Street.



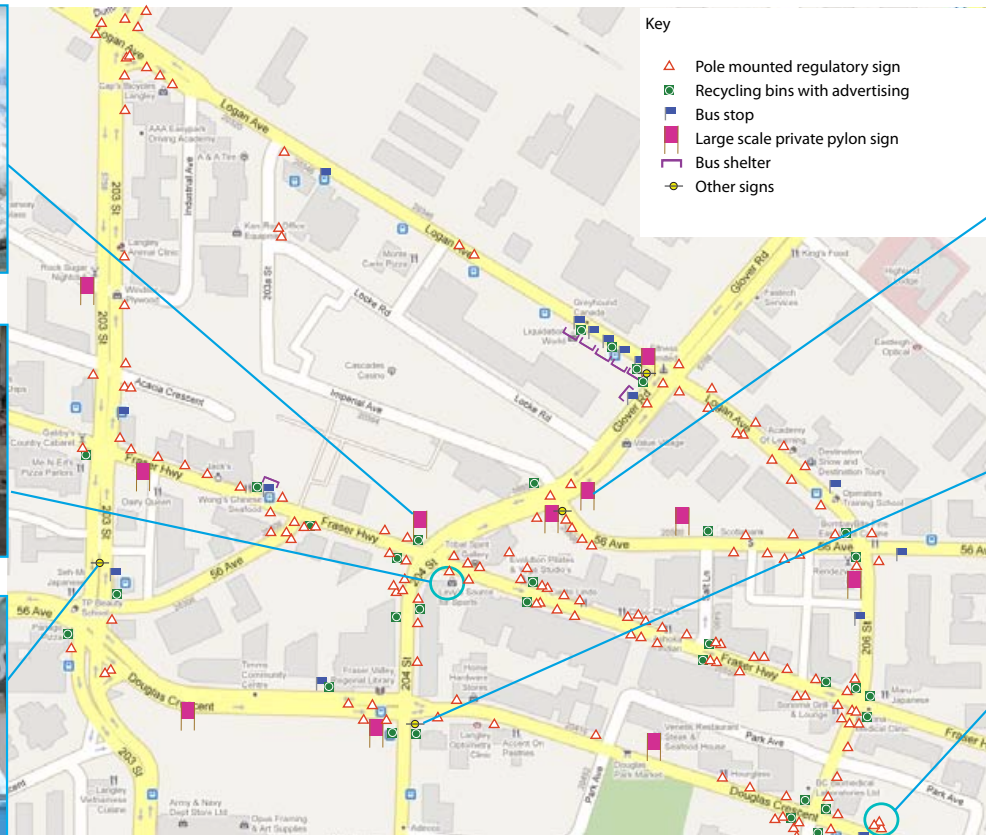
Attraction signage



Cluttered sidewalk



Rare parking direction



Large scale store signage



Pedestrian direction sign



Pole clutter

3. Review

3.1 Observations

Maps

There are many map views of the City, some generic including commercially produced street maps, while others are specific, such as the City of Langley Trail Map.

However all maps share a similar characteristic in that none was found that provided a high level of physical detail, being either at a large scale or simply drawn. This means that there is no public resource to encourage people to come to the City to walk around.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Transit Information

The City has a stated aim to make transit a mode of choice. This aim relies of course, on cooperation with a number of other agencies including the regional transport authority, TransLink.

Transit information is almost exclusively provided by TransLink in the Metro Vancouver region. The main area for public transit information would naturally be Langley Centre transit exchange followed by at bus stops. However what information that exists is generally very limited and difficult to use.

Buses stop at marked six bays in Langley Centre transit exchange. The exchange is located on Logan Avenue and Glover Road within a few minutes walk south of the Downtown core. However the route is not obvious upon arrival and there is no orientation information to help. This leaves unfamiliar visitors with no ability to understand in which direction or how long it will take to walk to Downtown.

There are also bus stops throughout the city although none in the one-way section of street in the Downtown core. These stops typically only display route number and name meaning it is impossible to plan where to catch a bus without reference to online TransLink resources or simply walking between stops.

Observations reveal passengers frequently asking each other or bus drivers for advice.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Tourism

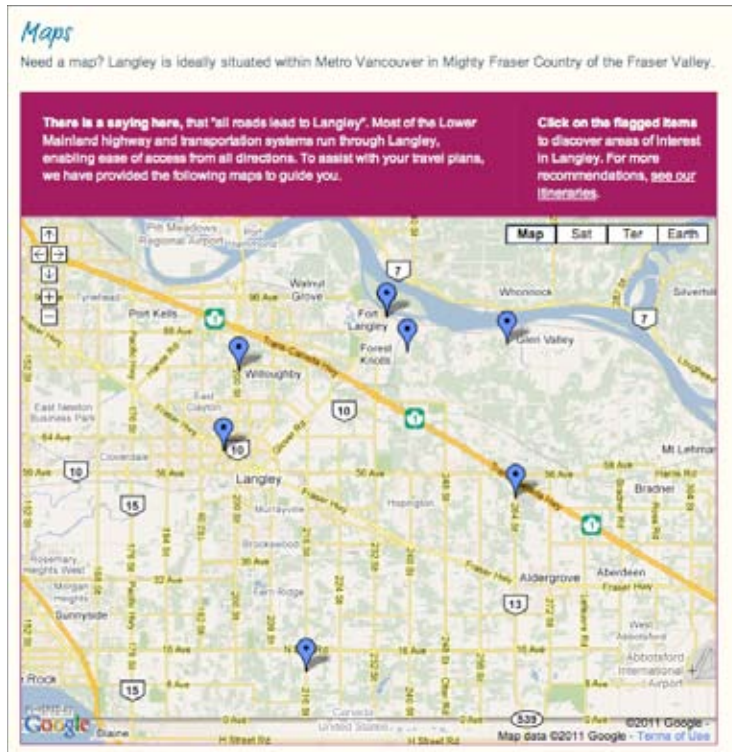
The City of Langley as a tourist destination, is generally sold as a package with the Township of Langley, and it is difficult to identify what the City considers its main tourist destinations to be.

Tourism Langley, which serves both the Township and the City, has a website providing visitor information, including map links. The map page is however simply a link to Google with places of interest toggled to further information.

It is interesting to note that the only flag within the City is for Willowbrook Shopping Centre. The Downtown Core and the Cascades Casino are not indicated.

Tourism Langley operates the Visitor Information Centre located on 200th Street. This is signed on Fraser Highway and provides the usual mix of leaflets and information for attractions and accommodation. However no specific City of Langley maps are available, the only option being a generic regional road map.

Events, such as the Langley Cruise-In, which play a major tourism role in the City, are also not well promoted on the website and the Cloverdale Fairgrounds, which hosts the Cloverdale Rodeo and Country Fair, do not get a mention even though they are significantly closer to the City than Fort Langley.



3. Review

3.1 Observations

Public art

Good, distinctive public art plays a role in wayfinding. It can provide visual cues that enable people to place themselves in their surroundings better.

The City of Langley, in addition to the banner program, has a surprising array of public art and interesting wayfinding markers that enhance the public realm and aid wayfinding.

The series of sculptures along 204 Street/ Glover Road run north-south through the heart of Downtown and celebrate the history of Langley.

Other notable public art includes the big chair erected by the Valley Direct Furniture company and the antique clock by the new downtown apartments, both of which are wayfinding markers on the Fraser Highway.

The streetscape can also function as public art such as the chessboard paving pattern in the Downtown Core outside the shop, Art For Floors.

This adds to the richness of the public realm and creates distinctiveness often lost through standardised urban development patterns.



3.2 Document Review



This page reviews the major policies and planning documentation that affects wayfinding in Langley.

Provincial/Regional

Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP)

The Livable Region Strategic Plan and its successor the emerging Regional Growth Strategy, identify the City of Langley as a regional town centre and an area for economic and population growth. The underlying forecasts influence regional spending and require preparation of community plans to translate the policies into local bylaws and plans.

Provincial Transit Plan (PTP)

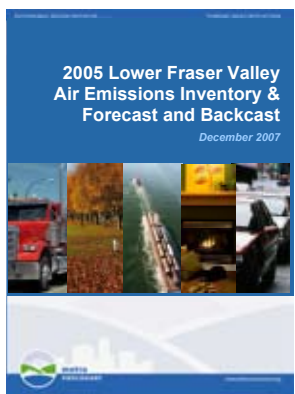
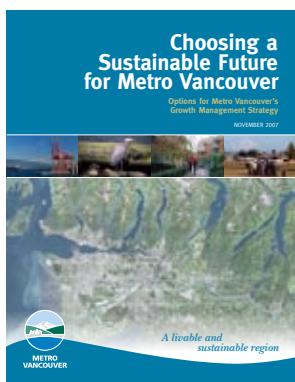
In 2008, the premier announced a new strategy to double transit ridership in BC. The PTP proposes \$14bn to be spent on new vehicles, rapid transit and green propulsion technologies.

Langley has proposed ideas for a major new transit exchange, Prairie Station that would include rapid transit and potentially, inter-urban rail services. Wayfinding would be a critical element of achieving service integration and an enabler for habitual drivers to make the choice to travel by transit.

Lower Fraser Valley Air Emissions Inventory

A core part of the regional strategy is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). In BC, the 1997 Kyoto targets have been superseded by a provincial GHG target of 33% reduction (from 2007 levels) by 2020. With the implementation of the planned federal and provincial measures, the GHG emissions in the Lower Fraser Valley are projected to hold steady at 2007 levels.

Each municipality has a role to play in defining additional measures to mitigate global climate change. Langley, being a car dominated environment, has an opportunity, through wayfinding, to encourage modal shift to more sustainable transport modes.



Municipal

Official Community Plan (OCP)

The LRSP designation is interpreted in the City of Langley Official Community Plan Bylaw (OCP). The OCP is a plan for sustainable growth with managed impact on open space; compact, complete communities; and increased transport choice.

Nevertheless the forecast level of growth is very large with the City expecting population to increase by 30% by 2031. External pressures add to the challenge that this expansion creates for sustainable development in the City. Amongst these, the Provincial Gateway Program is increasing major highway capacity and encouraged the creation of new car dependent communities such as Walnut Grove and Willoughby in the Township of Langley.

Downtown Master Plan

The Downtown Master Plan (DMP) provides a development framework for the commercial part of the City of Langley.

The eight key projects described by the DMP suggest a themed offer for visitors as well as a civic and local core. These internal and external facing elements have relevance to the structure, audiences and media for wayfinding.

Master Transportation Plan

The Master Transportation Plan (MTP) proposes large projects to reduce traffic congestion and develop new transit modes but also plans to establish walking and cycling networks for short trips by residents.

The priorities established by the MTP help inform choices about what parts of a wayfinding system should be carried out first to help solve immediate problems, and where others will be better held back to integrate with physical improvements.

3.3 User Research

Stakeholder questionnaire

As part of project engagement a City stakeholder questionnaire was issued. Fourteen responses were received.

The questionnaires reveal some important points of consensus including:

- Most respondents travel by car for work and leisure trips to the City
- On average respondents think it is much harder for visitors to find places than it is for them
- The most common resource for directions was the internet
- On average the wayfinding needs of outside visitors was prioritized over resident’s wayfinding
- There was no wayfinding element from the list of ten types agreed to be well-provided at present
- A summary of the results is appended.

Strategic project goals (number of votes)

The City will have a higher regional profile by being easier for new visitors to locate (0)

The City will be more competitive by attracting more visits by people in the surrounding area (1)

The City will be more liveable for its residents by being better connected internally (1)

The City will be recognised as a benchmark legible City combining information and development (2)

All of the above (8)

None of the above (2)

Priority project objectives (averaged scores)

- 1. Potential visitors become aware of downtown Langley from through highway routes (2.3)
- 2. Driving visitors are directed efficiently to downtown parking (2.6)
- 3. Cycling and walking are made easier for local trips into downtown (3.4)
- 4. Residents are informed about destinations and businesses in their City (3.5)
- 5= Transit users experience a more seamless journey (4.0)
- 5= Willowbrook Mall visitors are encouraged to link trips to Downtown Langley (4.0)
- 7. Visitors learn about the history and attractions of the City (4.4)
- 8. Wayfinding signs promote ‘The Place to Be’ brand (4.7)
- 9. Five other separate suggestions

3.3 User Research

Public Survey

A small sample survey of public views was conducted in Abbotsford. Abbotsford was chosen because residents would be expected to travel through Langley en route to other destinations in Surrey or Vancouver and because respondents needed to rely on their memories to describe the City.

Some simple questions were asked in the survey including naming places containing the word 'Langley' and naming Langley's landmarks.

A list of answers to these questions reveals some confusion about identities and few references to the Downtown of the City of Langley (2 references in 19 responses).

The references to landmarks are dominated by what might be termed 'social landmarks'. These are destinations that punctuate journey memory but would be difficult to use in a wayfinding system as they may lack wider distinctiveness and/or are transient in nature.

Places called 'Langley'

- Fort Langley
- Langley Bypass
- Langley Willowbrook Mall
- Langley Historical Centre
- Langley Falls
- District of Langley
- Downtown Langley
- Langley Meadows
- Colossus Langley (movie theatre)
- Langley Airport
- Langley

Places mentioned as Langley landmarks

- Willowbrook Mall
- Walmart
- Home Depot
- Montana's Rib Place
- Golden Ears Bridge
- Bedford House
- Colossus movie theatre
- Fort Langley
- Newlands Golf & Country Club
- Langley Events Sports Centre
- Al Anderson Memorial Pool
- Langley Arena (Twin Rinks)
- Langley Memorial Hospital
- Old Court House (Ft Langely)
- Langley City Hall
- Albion Ferry (closed)
- Derby Reach

3.3 User Research

Main conclusions from the responses

The most obvious finding from the surveys is the lack of consensus about what the City of Langley is and comprises.

The inability of the public to distinguish between the City of Langley and Township of Langley and their tendency to focus on specific destinations rather than broader places may be related to the way in which most people travel.

The ability to drive directly to destinations, and to receive services without leaving the car, is profoundly affecting our view of the world. Driving removes us from the physical details of places we pass through and speed distorts spatial awareness. In combination with the blandness of buildings designed to be driven to, driving can reduce travel to point to point experiences interspersed with time in an enclosed environment. Reminding people of how satisfying it is to explore a real Downtown is a promotional opportunity and justification for better wayfinding.

Following this thread, the stakeholder surveys reveals a broad vision for a wayfinding system as a tool for business growth and community development. In more specific questions, the stakeholders grouped around an initial focus on driver signage, and promoting the City's identity, proximity and diversity of offer. This would be aimed at an audience who typically visit the same few destinations and remain oblivious to Downtown Langley although it is just a few minutes away.

Helping citizens get the most from their City and Downtown is a next stage priority linked wider measures to broadening transport choice.

3.3 User research

Public Survey

The major element of this survey was to ask people to draw mental maps of Downtown Langley.

Few maps referred to the Downtown core other than as a vague 'blob' whereas there was consistent reference to the Golden Ears bridge/200th St. corridor as well as attractions such as Willowbrook Mall.

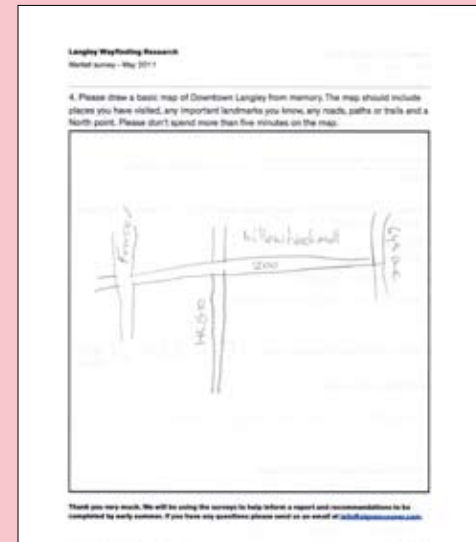
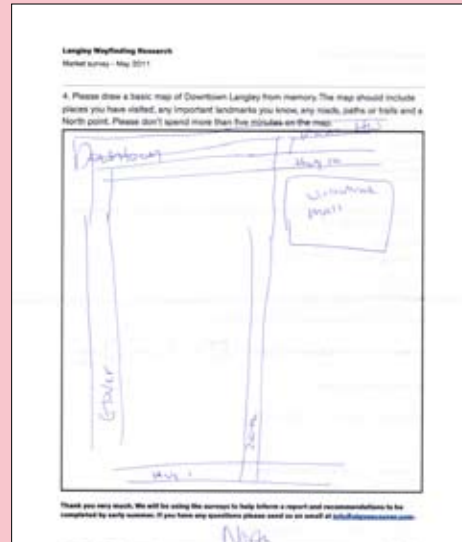
The perspective in which people drew their maps varied greatly, not only in terms of orientating North, East, South and West, but also in terms of scale. Some maps attempted to cover a very wide area whereas others were very concentrated. Few people kept rigidly within the drawing box, finding it difficult to understand scale and distance. Many of the maps also failed to recognise that not all the highways are in a rigid grid and that some cut diagonally across the downtown area.

This is a common result in places with high car use. In such areas place identity becomes diluted as a result of the relatively insulated experience of travel by car. By contrast, cities where walking and cycling are more prevalent tend to produce mental maps richer in landmarks and geography.

As a human-scale place, the challenge presented to the Downtown Master Plan and wayfinding strategy is to add contextual detail to people's mental maps related more to the experience of the place than the experience of the journey.



3. Review



4.0 Analysis

The purpose of this section is to simplify the analysis into a set of major themes that provide the basis for the wayfinding strategy. It includes a technical examination of what barriers exist to legibility as well as experience and good practice to the identification and prioritisation of specific solutions.

4. Analysis

4.1 Urban structure

Historical development and growth

The first European settlement in the area was Fort Langley. The interior remained largely undeveloped, but as the region became more populous, the increasing need to plan and subdivide the land led to the incorporation of the District of Langley in 1873.

Although by 1886 the area had been subdivided, even as late as 1920, the settlement was still very small. By 1950, after the arrival of mass transit and improvements to roads, the growing urban community of Langley Prairie, began to feel that their needs were not being met by the largely rural farming Township Council and in 1951 the population of 800 was mobilized and by 1955 the incorporated City of Langley was founded.

The City expanded rapidly and in the past 50 years has seen a thirty-fold increase in population.

Retaining the benefits of growth

The rapid expansion of the City's population and the economy is an aspect of regional development that will make the City the natural centre of a ribbon of new homes and businesses. This offers the potential for a new influx of visitors from around the City.

However, it is also clear that retaining the patronage of existing and new City of Langley residents is important for civic identity and stability.

Informing residents that it is not necessary to drive out of the City to find most services and amenities could support this objective.



1856



1920



1939



4. Analysis

4.1 Urban structure

City in context

Continuous conurbation

The City of Langley sits within a larger conurbation including Cloverdale in the City of Surrey, and Willowbrook, Willoughby, Murrayville and Brookwood in the Langley Township.

These characteristics may help explain why the City has some difficulty in distinguishing itself from the Township and can be seen as part of a greater urban area.

The edges of the City are particularly difficult to define because there is a bleeding of identical land uses between the City and Township. For example, the northern edge is home to light industrial and big box commercial businesses on both sides of the boundary while the southern edge of the City houses low rise residential with no distinguishable change in development.

On the eastern side of the City, there is a break in the continuous conurbation between the City and Murrayville, however, this is well within the Township of Langley, beyond the City limits and as such, again it is difficult to determine where the edge of the City lies.

The public understanding of the City boundary is therefore primarily created by the gateway markers, which are located at many of the major routes into the City.

Compact City

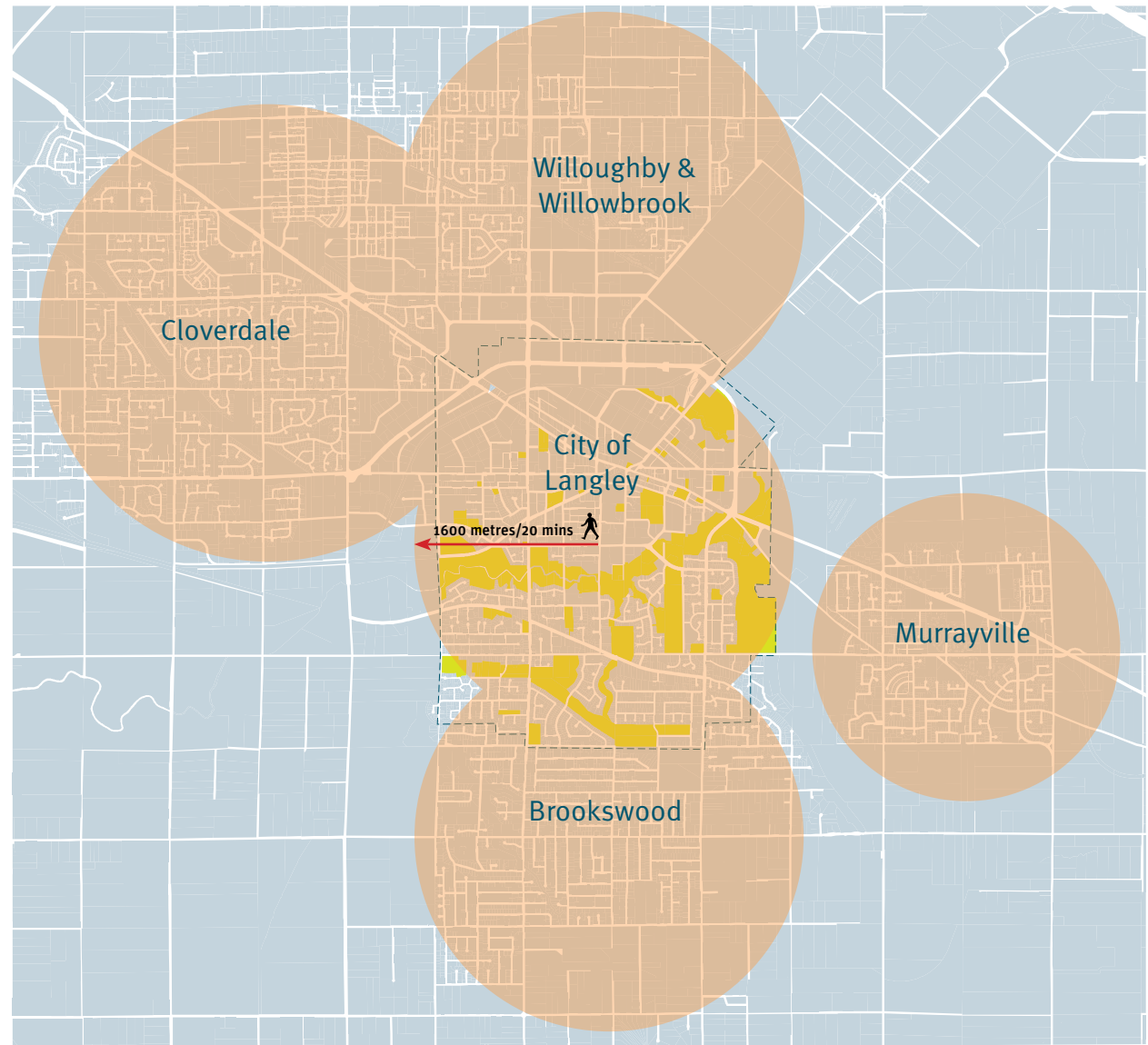
Langley, in terms of its size, is a very walkable City and at 10.2km², is the second smallest City in Metro Vancouver (after White Rock). Its broadly square shape means that no matter where a journey starts, the City boundary is never more than a 20 minute walk away.

Its compact size makes it an ideal place to focus on sustainable travel. The City has a wide range of services and amenities within a 10-20 minute walk of most residents, however cars remain the dominant mode of choice. This is because “walkability” (a qualitative measure of how easy and pleasant it is to walk), relates to non-time dependent factors such as quality of walking infrastructure and land use patterns – factors that work against walking in the City.

In the north an absence of walking infrastructure on desire lines, wide streets with large forecourt parking and set back developments, large intersections with long waits for cross walk signals and frequent interruptions to sidewalks for vehicle accesses are commonplace.

In the south, the trail system provides a valuable walking infrastructure, however, finding it is not easy and it is not suitable in all weathers. Further, culs-de-sac, which are a common street layout in this area, are often signed with a ‘No Exit’ for drivers which in turn discourages pedestrians.

The overall impact is that a compact City which should be eminently walkable scores low for walkability.



4. Analysis

4.1 Urban structure

Dominance of the car

The City is dominated by major roads, with the Langley Bypass, Fraser Highway, 200 Street and 203 Street carrying the highest traffic flows. Within the City, these streets are between four and six lanes wide and can be even wider at their intersections leading to long waits for cross walk signals.

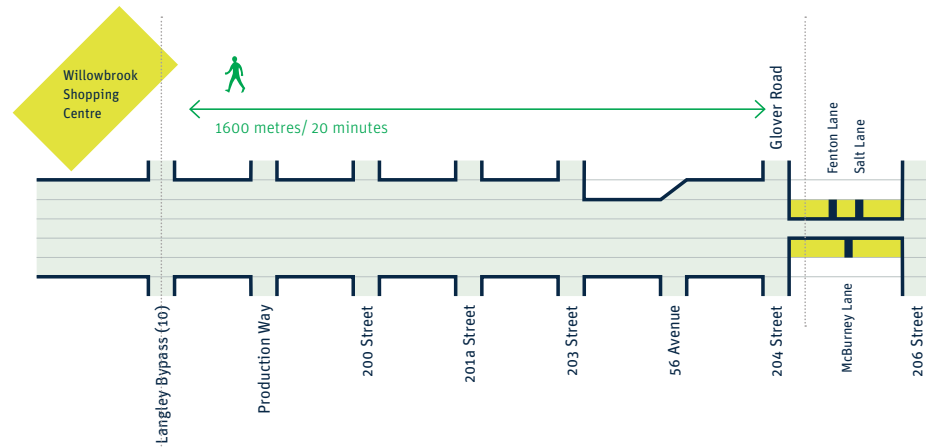
Major roads are fronted by malls and big-box development which is invariably set back from the highway to provide large parking lots. Heavy traffic and set back development creates a car oriented environment that reduces the free and easy movement of people on foot.

Langley's environment is one designed around car access. Drive-thrus, large surface parking lots between buildings and the highway and the absence of obvious walking routes all point to this fact.

There is no shortage of parking in the City, but little obvious enforcement of the unauthorized use of private spaces, the visitor is presented with a confusing range of options.

Even where distances are not great, the perception is that they are because the walking environment is so poor. For example, the Downtown Core is 20 minutes walk from Willowbrook Shopping Centre, but the Fraser Highway is such a poor pedestrian environment that it is not a journey that is undertaken.

It is not possible to plan a reversal of this pattern of life in the immediate future but many factors are at play that may reduce the freedoms we once associated with car travel.



Walkability



Drive-thru Langley



Parking



Parking areas

4. Analysis

4.1 Urban structure

Legibility: Land use

The defining characteristics of the City of Langley are that it is a predominantly a low rise, low density City with a hidden city centre.

The City is divided by Nicomekl Park which separates the multi-family residences, commercial and industrial areas of the north from the single family residential areas to the south. The Park is a natural flood plain and acts as a protected green buffer between the two faces of the City.

The retail offer within the City of Langley is dispersed with strip malls on the outskirts, Willowbrook Shopping Centre to the north-west, Langley Mall in Downtown and a hidden Downtown retail core which has a number of boutique shops fronting a downgraded, single-lane Fraser Highway that creates a unique sense of place. This section of the Fraser Highway is uniquely one-way, and has been treated with build-outs to protect chevron parking, distinctive paving, gateway marking and road closure creating new plazas.

The non-retail offer is less prominent. The Cascades Casino, Coast Hotel and Convention Centre, Twin Rinks and Power Centre feature amongst comments while City and Douglas Parks provide a range of community leisure attractions with some wider appeal.

There are five classic legibility factors (Lynch, 1960):

Edges – the City has weak edges as a result of a lack of clear definition between built forms and large open parking lots. The Nicomekl Floodplain creates a natural break but this is not visible from Downtown.

Paths – Paths only really exist as sidewalks. However observation reveals desire lines across parking lots and between buildings which are undefined and hence illegible.

Nodes – McBurney Lane provides a rare untrafficked node. Other nodes that could be made more accessible and animated, include Innes Corners and Langley Centre exchange

Districts – The downtown core has a distinct area character but other potential districts are more limited and include the Paddington Station development in the West Gateway.

Landmarks – St Joseph's Church provides a traditional landmark. It's spire is visible from many places in the City. Other landmarks are less physically imposing and include unexpected highlights against the predominance of single storey buildings.



4.1 Urban structure

Legibility: Connectivity

Connectivity and access by car

The City is connected to the wider region by its road network. The principal connections provide short commutes to central Surrey, Pitt Meadows and the new and established communities at Fort Langley, Aldergrove, Cloverdale, Wiloughby, Brookwood, Murrayville and Walnut Grove.

The street pattern is not a typical grid due to the angle of Fraser Highway and railway. The effect of some streets including 200th St. running north-south while others such as Glover Road run at 45° to true north is quite disorienting and creates complex intersections.

The creation of the Langley Bypass and the diversion of the Fraser Highway between Glover Road and 206th Street to provide the Downtown core, have had a marked effect on City activity. Both these projects have helped protect the City centre from congestion, but have also reduced awareness of Downtown by passing drivers.

Connectivity & access by transit

Transit access is currently limited to public bus services. However, the Greyhound Bus company also have a terminal in the City offering private services.

The key public services are the 501 and 502 that connect Langley to SkyTrain stations in the City of Surrey. The 595 is also an important link across the Golden Ears Bridge to Maple Meadows West Coast Express Station.

In addition to these key services, a range of local bus routes link local communities although these routes tend to be slow and/or of limited coverage.

Langley Centre transit exchange is the main bus facility in the City. While interchange between services is possible here, there is little to allow passengers to understand what services are available or when they run.

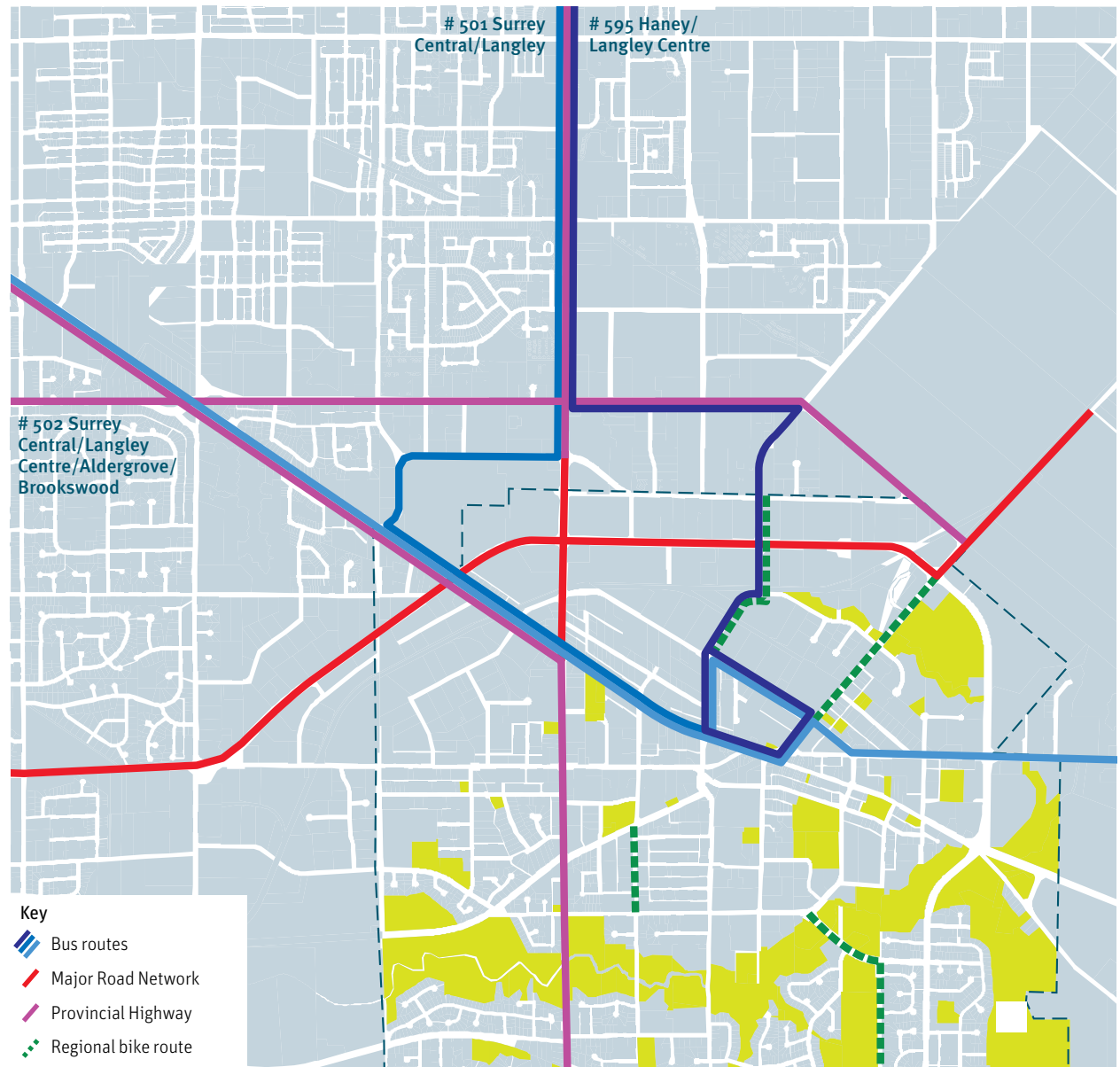
Connectivity & access by bike and on foot.

Although distances between destinations are often short, walking and cycling in the City can be quite challenging.

Dedicated bike facilities are rare and the dominance of motor traffic means that riding or walking into the City from outside is constantly interrupted by high vehicle flows, busy intersections and long crossing times.

By contrast there is a very attractive network of trails through and in Nicomekl Park some of which connect the north of the City with the southern residential neighbourhoods.

Within the Downtown core a one-way section of the Fraser Highway has enabled the City to create an area where the balance of traffic and people has been shifted. This area is quieter and of a much more human scale than the arterial corridors.



4. Analysis

4.2 Urban infrastructure

Balancing information requirements

Clutter

The development of land uses that cater for car borne customers has created the perceived need to compete for attention at the roadside.

The large signage structures are more suited to strip malls than a compact city centre and create a visually confusing mix of information. In some places multiple sign poles create obstructions in the sidewalk and for other information.

A process of reducing unnecessary or redundant public information and rationalizing what remains onto fewer poles will help reduce clutter and provide a simpler information environment into which new wayfinding can be added.

Transit signage

An early opportunity exists for the City to discuss with TransLink implementation of new information standards at the Langley Centre exchange similar to that applied at the Canada Line bus exchanges in Vancouver and Richmond.

Areas of particular importance to City wayfinding are providing orientation information for alighting passengers and onward journey planning diagrams and maps for showing options for continuing journeys from that point.



4. Analysis

4.2 Urban infrastructure

Working with business

Bylaws and cooperation

One of the real attractions of the Downtown part of the City is its diverse retail offer. Independent businesses offering niche shopping experiences characterise the Downtown core.

Outside of the core, the mall developments provide different shopping, dining and services within their own development settings.

However there is an apparently uncoordinated approach to how businesses advertise themselves leading to clutter, as mentioned previously, and also visual noise as a result of scale, repetition and design of business signage.

A separate consultation on the adoption of guidance or bylaws to reduce the scale or visual impact of private signs in the interest of urban quality could also be considered as part of implementing the Downtown Master Plan. It may be possible to enlist the support and leadership of the Downtown Langley Business Association to create a framework for a more cohesive approach to private signage with design guidance set out by the City.



In some cities bylaws and design guidance have been produced to describe acceptable standards of store sign design. These often refer to heritage or special character areas. Picture: Walton Street, Port Hope, Ont.

4. Analysis

4.3 Awareness

Providing a welcome: The invisible downtown

The street network in the City of Langley has been managed to create a protected downtown core. This core has a selection of independent stores that complement the big box, mall and tourist offers of other local centres.

Both the major Langley Bypass (Highway 10) and the minor bypass of Fraser Highway divert traffic around the centre. For traffic visiting the stores on Langley Bypass or Willowbrook Mall there is no information to indicate that a downtown exists at all.

However while creating a human-scale centre, this has also resulted unintentionally in the downtown core reducing in visibility.

Approaching from the west drivers and passengers are only able to see glimpses before being detoured north, while from the east they only see 'Do Not Enter' signs.



4. Analysis

4.3 Awareness

Place names

One name: many places

A repetitive theme in the research was vagueness about identity of “Langley”.

It is unsurprising that a number of places in the region use the name Langley, however, despite each name being unique, their lack of familiarity and understanding creates problems.

Historically Fort Langley is where the name first appears and although some people do say Langley when referring to Fort Langley, generally the village name is used in its entirety.

It is more common to be ambiguous about the Township and City, which is a relatively recent separation, within living memory of many. The close relationship between the two municipalities means that they are often mapped and bracketed together and the urban development that spreads across the City boundary means it is difficult to be certain where one starts and the other ends.

The name “City of Langley” is not used consistently on public information and driver guide signs, boundary markers and other information refer to the City in a variety of forms.

Therefore, it is important that places are given discrete names, that those names are used unambiguously and consistently, and reinforced by marking boundaries where appropriate.

One place: many names

Confusion about naming extends beyond the use of names in an ambiguous way to the absence of names altogether.

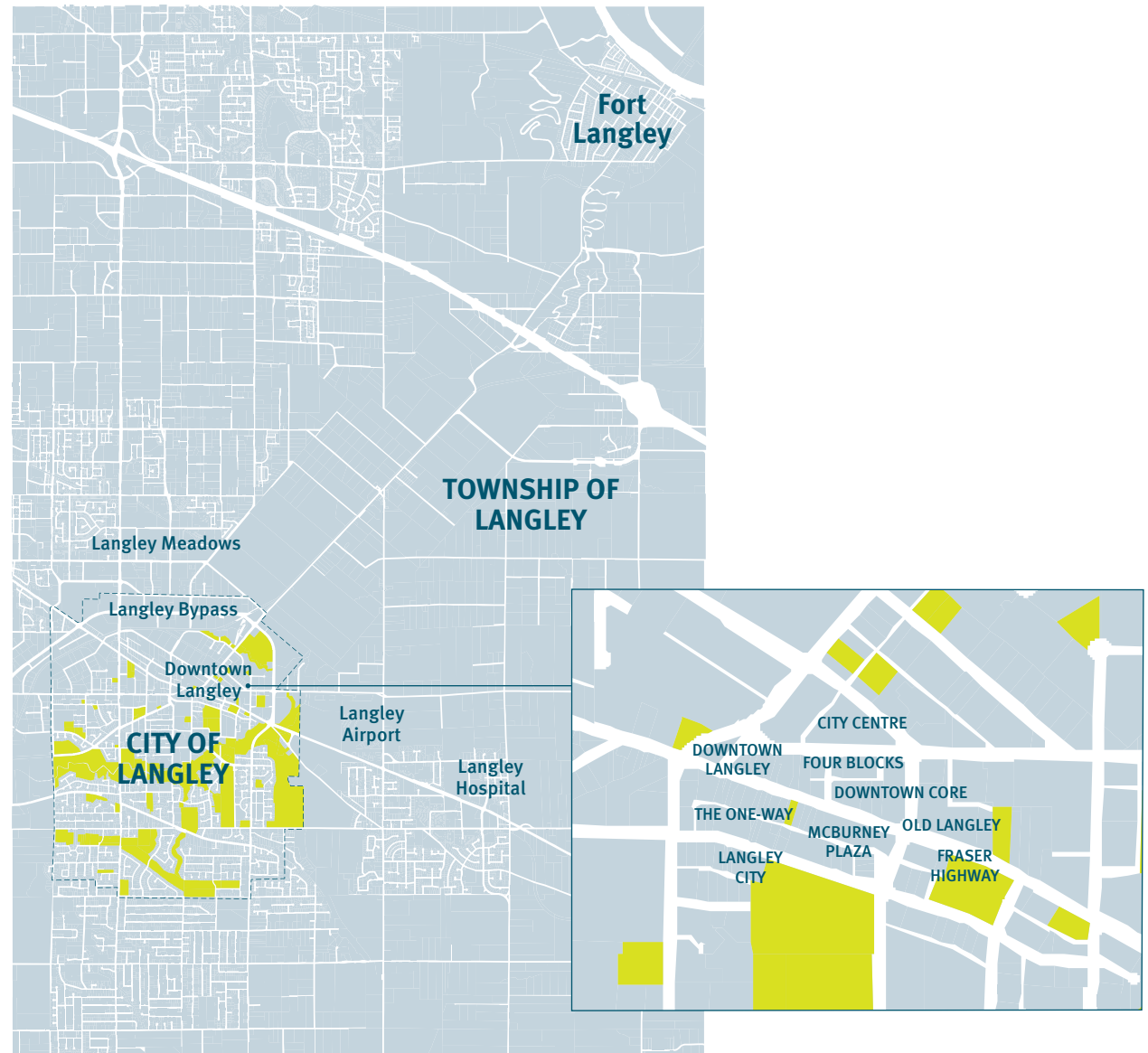
Where names are not well known or do not exist, people make up a name, which rarely reaches a consensus view.

Within the City the key element of the Downtown Master Plan offer, its main street suffers from many identities precisely because it does not have a recognisable name that is used consistently by the public and City Hall.

Depending on who is asked the section of Fraser Highway between Glover Street and Logan Street is referred to as:

- the Downtown Core
- McBurney Plaza
- Old Langley
- Langley City
- Downtown Langley
- Downtown Core
- City Centre
- the One-Way
- the Four Blocks

This ambiguity is visible on all forms of signage and information.



4. Analysis

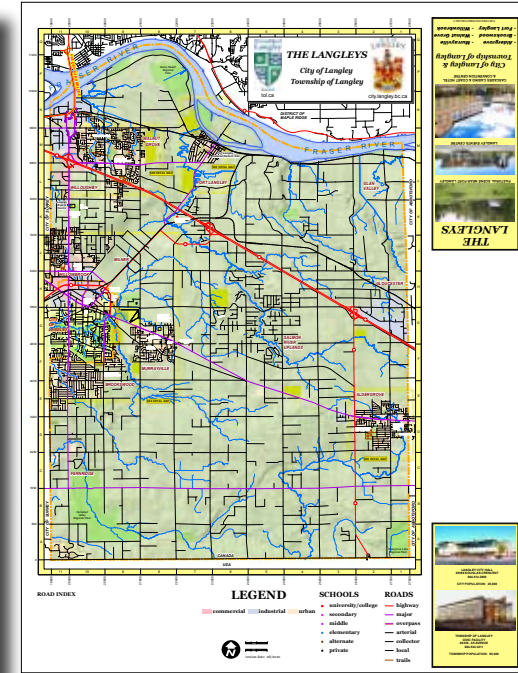
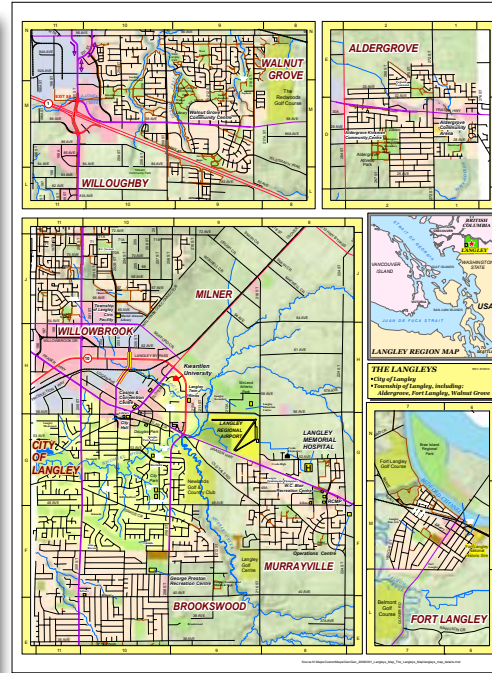
4.3 Awareness

3 sided map

Area maps of the City are commonly produced in partnership with the Township. This has produced a peculiarly introspective view of the regional location of the City of Langley.

Whereas the City actually sits strategically in the centre of connections through Surrey Ridge and the US border, the maps seem to show the City almost 'clinging' on the edge of the Township. As a result the instinct when using these maps is to turn them over to see what is to the left of the downtown core.

Placing the City more centrally in the geography of the area and respecting its neighbours on all four sides, would help to communicate how pivotal the City really is to a very large community of people.



4. Analysis

4.3 Awareness

Attractions, destinations and events

Attractions and destinations

The parks, community and leisure facilities available across the City attract visitors from a wide area. The study stakeholder group identified a list of 30 individual or types of destination.

From this list a few were identified as either difficult to find or major destinations. Some will be more suitable for driver guide signing - for instance recreation centres in the southern area of the City, while others may be identified on mapping or proximity to arrival points.

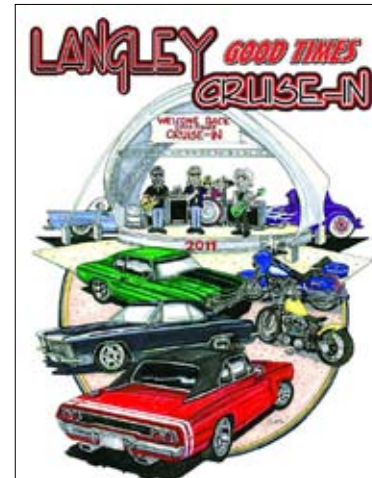
Events

With limited tourist destinations, Langley's major visitor attractions tend to be event-based. Events such as the Langley Cruise-In, Langley Walk, Community Day Parade and Triathlon attract people from a wide area of Vancouver and the Lower Mainland, and the Cruise-In has become one of the largest mixed-car shows in Canada and one of the Top 10 in North America.

Further afield, Cloverdale Fairgrounds, which are four kilometers from the City, are home to over 1,000 events per year. The main event is the Rodeo and Country Fair, which in 2010 attracted 72,000 visitors.



1. Al Anderson Memorial Pool
2. Bars and drinking establishments
3. Brydon Lagoon
4. Greyhounds bus depot
5. Cascades Casino, Coast Hotel & Convention Centre
6. City Hall
7. City Park
8. City Schools
9. Dog Off Leash Park
10. Douglas park and recreation centre
11. Downtown stores
12. Innes Corner
13. Kwantlen Polytechnic University
14. Langley Centre transit exchange
15. Langley Mall/ Army & Navy
16. Langley Community Music School
17. Langley Power Centre
18. Library
19. McBurney Lane
20. Newlands Golf & Country Club
21. Nicomekl Floodplain Park and trails
22. Police office and fire hall
23. Restaurants
24. Sendall Gardens
25. Senior Resource Centre
26. Spirit Square
27. St. Joseph's Church
28. Timms Community Centre
29. Twin Rinks
30. Willowbrook Mall



4. Analysis

4.3 Awareness

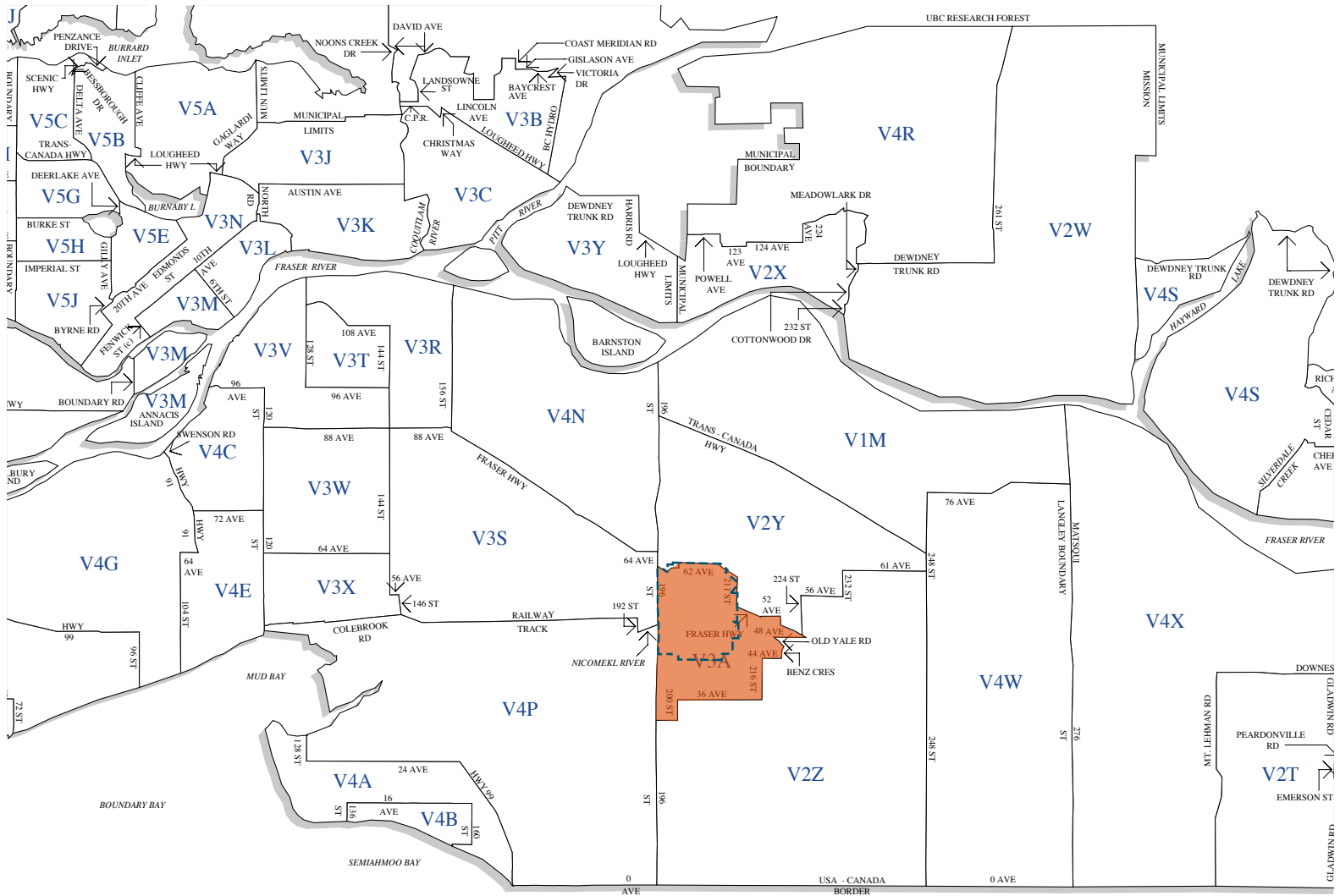
V3A

Postal identity

The City of Langley does not have a unique postal code and is included in the "V3A" postal code that extends beyond the City limits into the surrounding Township of Langley. The postal code area is shown here with the city limits indicated in a dotted line.

This is a historic administrative oversight which must contribute to misconceptions for people who are looking for City of Langley destinations.

In terms of wayfinding objectives, the idea of developing a unique sense of place and the ability to construct a consistent system of addressing would both be assisted by a unique City of Langley postal code.



4. Analysis

4.3 Awareness

The Place to Be

Using the brand

The City has invested in a brand identity that is consistently applied throughout City-produced materials. The brand is an important part of the economic development program which includes the Downtown Master Plan.

The brand is yet to make major impact on the street scene but has been used on some street furniture.

The strength of the brand can help to resolve some of the issues of weak physical boundaries and built form by careful application in other areas.

The production of street signs and maps is one area that can be designed to reflect the brand approach, while more direct applications that would support consistency might include banners and development site hoardings.



Appendices

applied_
wayfinding information design

member of the Edenspiekermann alliance

amsterdam berlin london stuttgart vancouver seoul