City of Kawartha Lakes
Municipal and Tourism Wayfinding Strategy

21 July 2026

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5

Community group and staff sessions

3

Day site audit

3

In-person community sessions

111

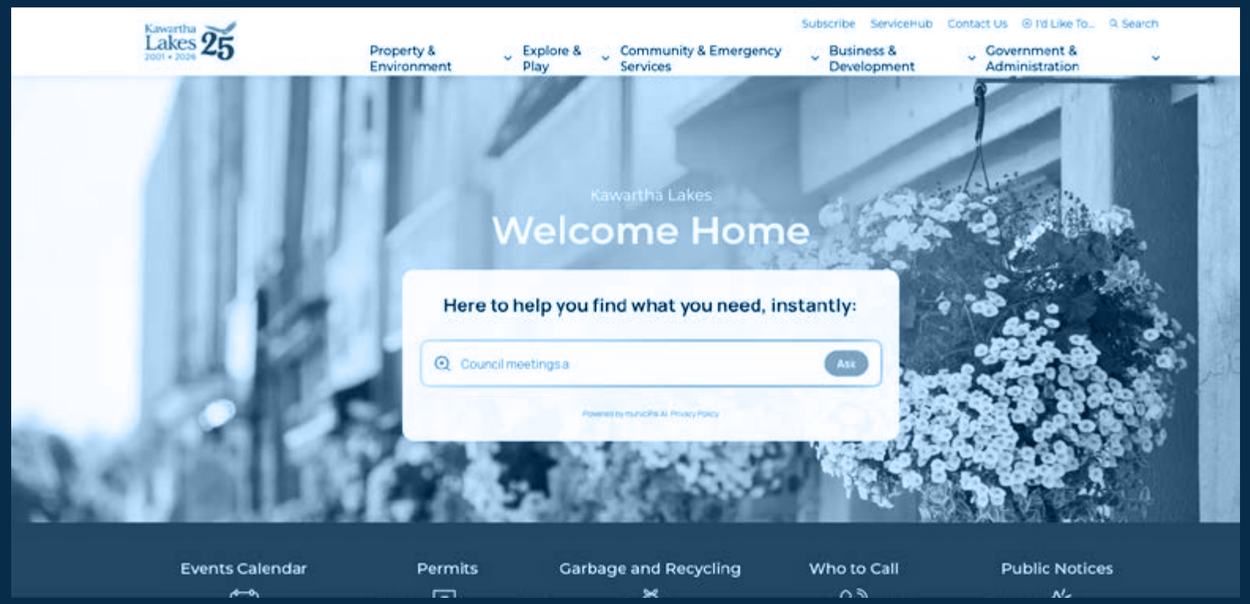
Online survey participants

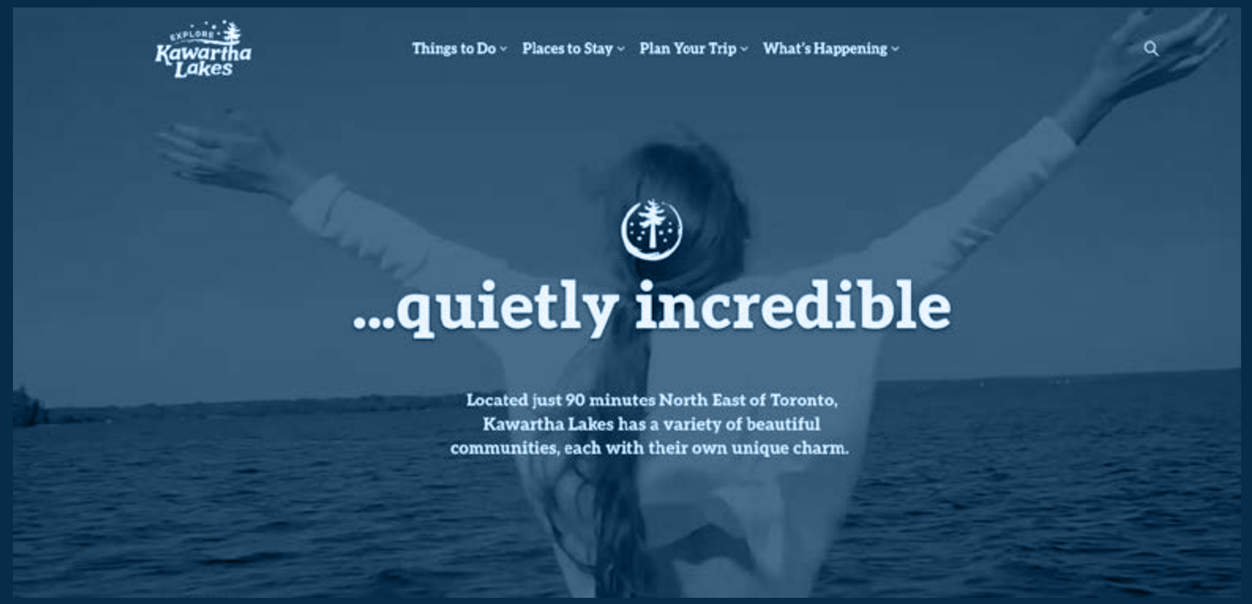
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What We Heard

Community of communities
Regional identity and individuality
Quietly Incredible
Under-signed hidden gems

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Corporate brand...

Practical, stable and professional.

Tourism brand...

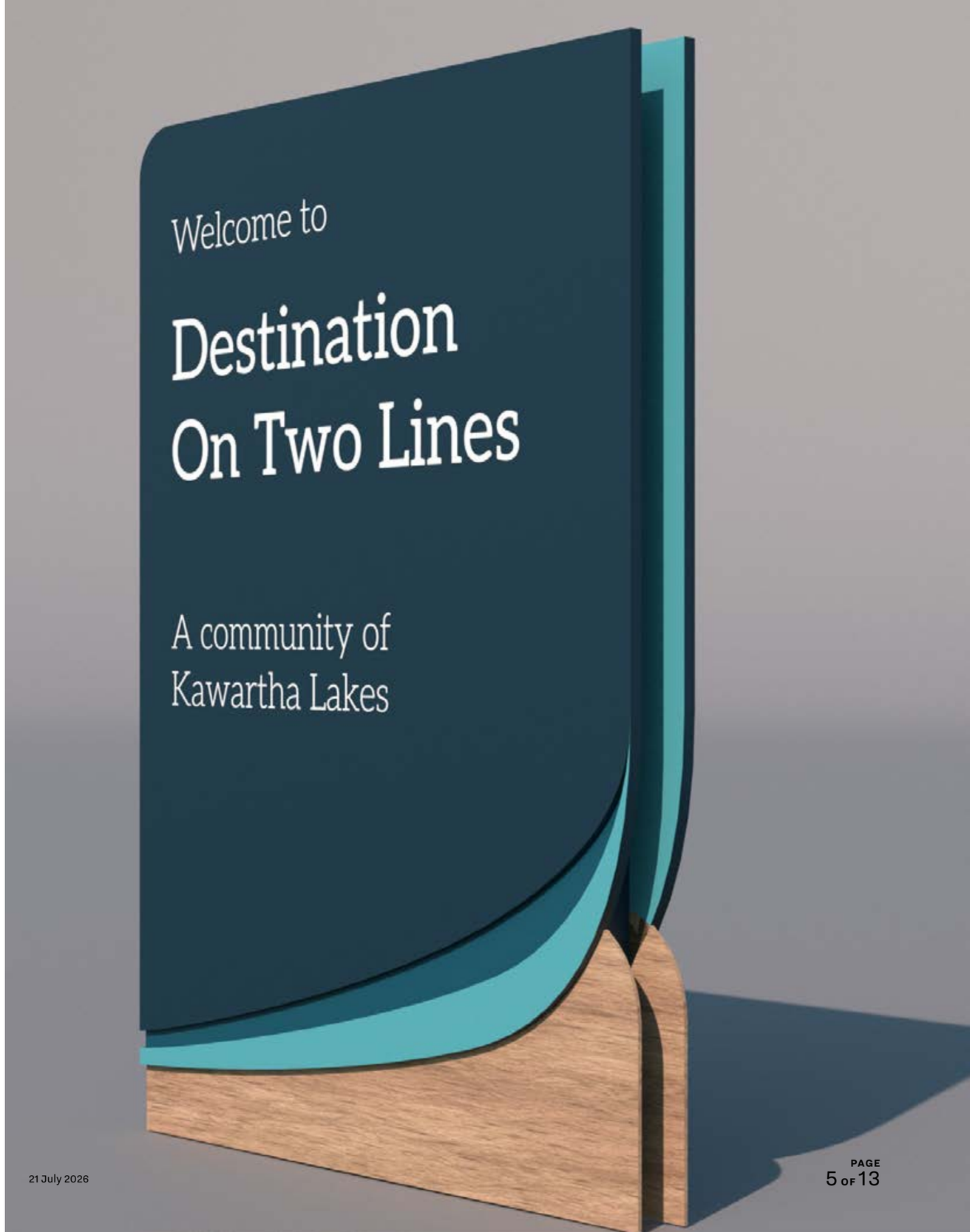
Aspiring, energetic and welcoming.

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Design Inspiration







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The Sign Family



ID1
Municipal Gateway

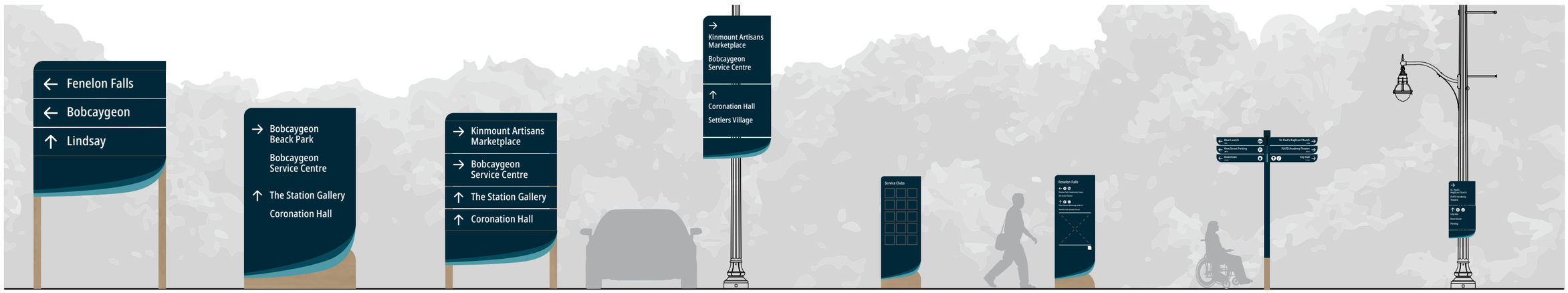
ID2
Primary Community Gateway (Existing Structure)

ID2.1
Primary Community Gateway

ID3
Secondary Community Gateway (post mounted)

ID3.1
Secondary Community & Event Gateway

ID4
Tertiary Community Gateway



VD1
Primary Vehicular Directional

VD2
Secondary Vehicular Directional

VD2.1
Secondary Vehicular Directional

VD3
Tertiary Vehicular Directional

SC1
Service Club

PD1
Primary Pedestrian Directional

PD2
Secondary Pedestrian Directional

PD3
Tertiary Pedestrian Directional

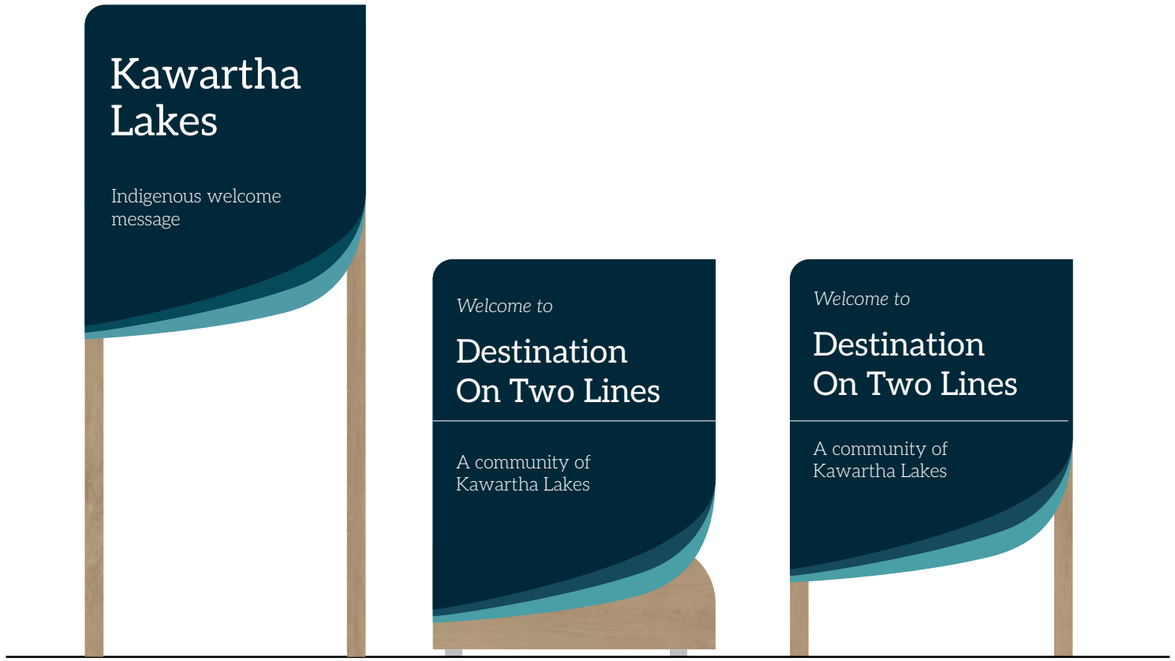
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Community Gateway Signs





Celebrating collective identity



Connecting communities

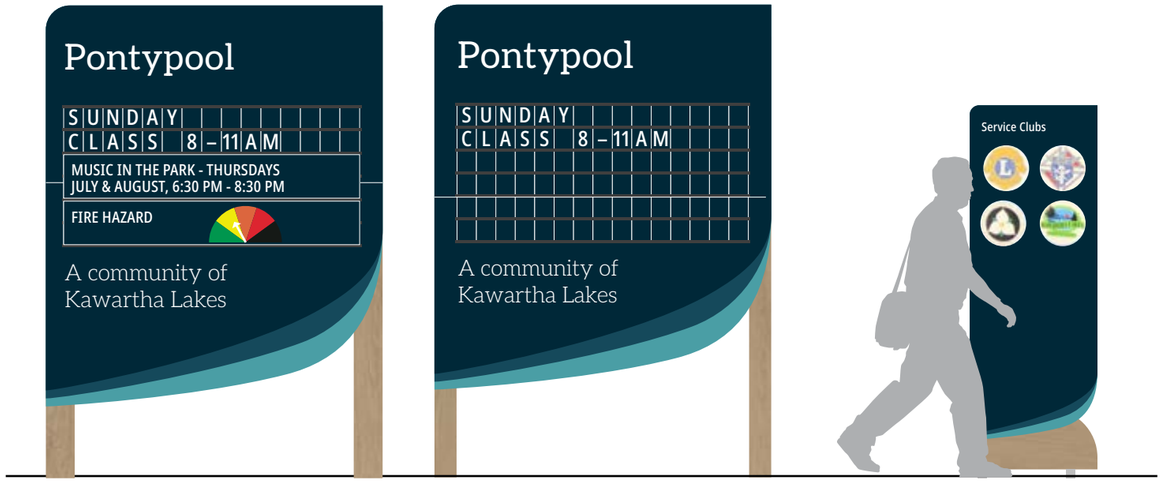
Unifying communities under a collective identity to strengthen the municipal connection.

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Honouring what works



Refining

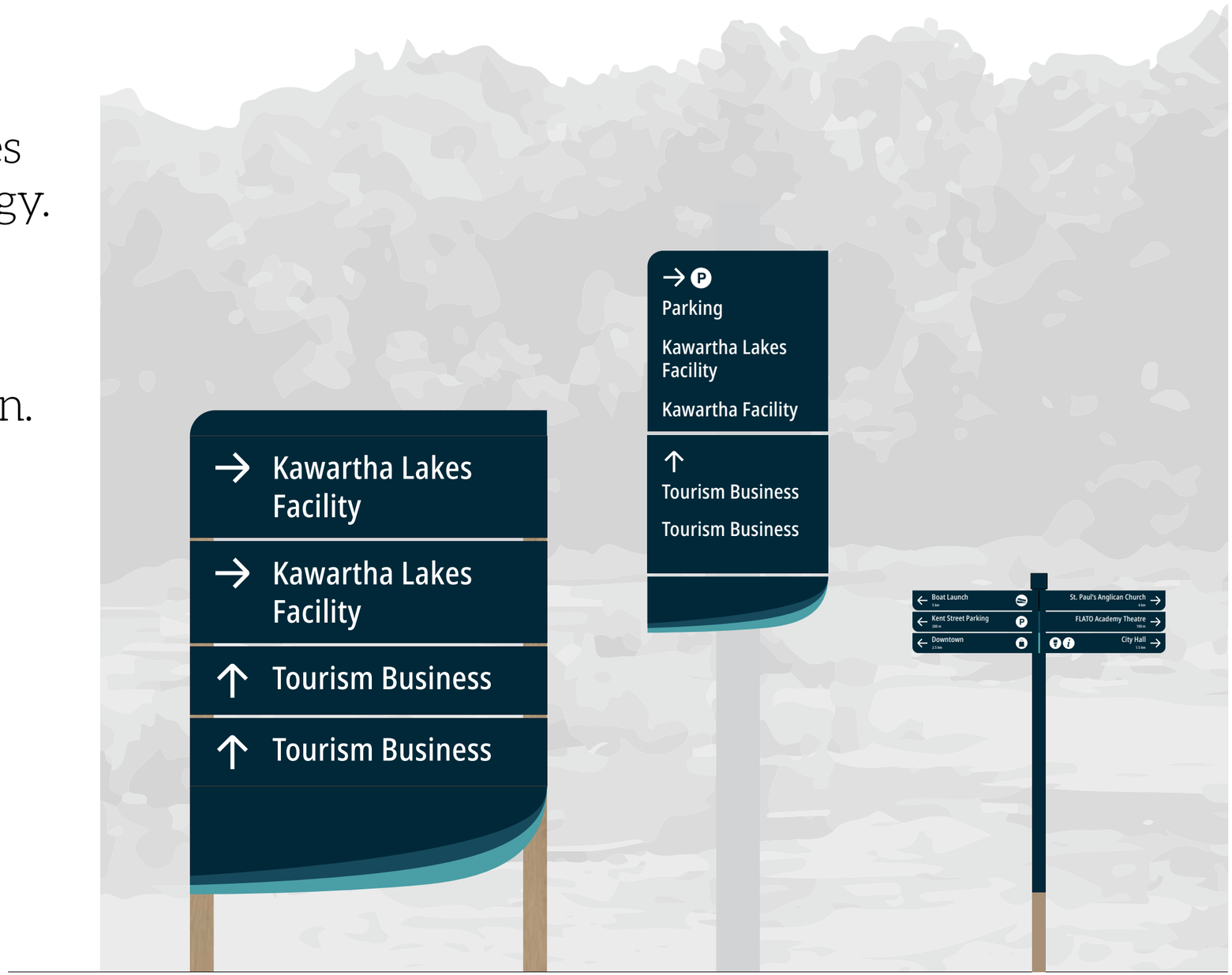
Improving longevity and creating optimal engagement.

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Increasing Dwell Times

Highlighting the abundance of facilities and tourism businesses through a cost-recovery strategy.

Directing to parking and encouraging on foot exploration.

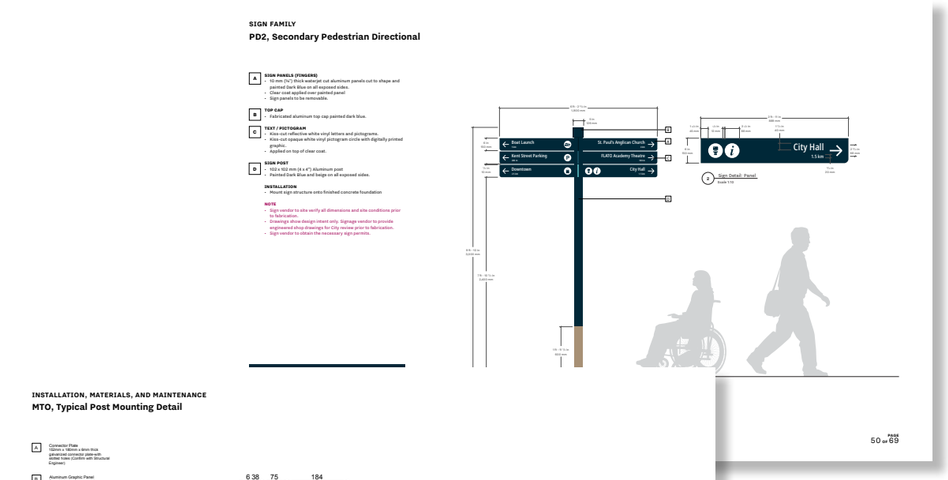


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Scope of Strategy

Design, implementation, procurement, maintenance.

The strategy provides technical drawings for fabrication, guidelines for messaging signage, placement, procurement guidelines, and maintenance recommendations.


SIGN FAMILY
PD2, Secondary Pedestrian Directional

A SIGN PANELS (SYNAGRO)
- 3mm thick aluminum sign cut aluminum panels cut to shape and painted Dark Blue on all exposed sides.
- Clear coat applied over painted panel
- Sign panels to be removable.

B TOP CAP
- Fabricated aluminum top cap painted dark blue.

C TEXT / PICTOGRAM
- Kiss-cut reflective white vinyl letters and pictograms.
- Kiss-cut opaque white vinyl pictogram circle with digitally printed graphic
- Applied on top of clear coat.

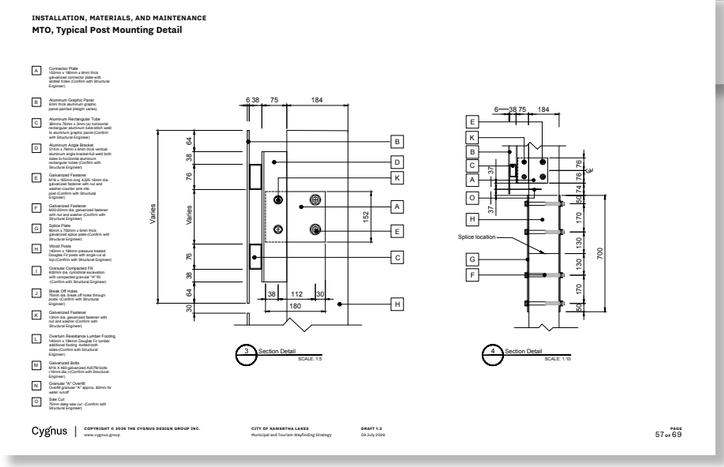
D SIGN POST
- 102 x 102 mm (4 x 4") aluminum post
- Painted Dark Blue and beige on all exposed sides.

INSTALLATION
- Mount sign structure onto finished concrete foundation

NOTE
- Sign vendor to site verify all dimensions and site conditions prior to fabrication.
- Drawings show design intent only. Signage vendor to provide engineered shop drawings for City review prior to fabrication.
- Sign vendor to obtain the necessary sign permits.

Bast Ranch
Kent Street Parking
Downtown
St. Paul's Anglican Church
FLATO Academy Theatre
City Hall
City Hall
1.5 km
Sign Detail: Panel
Scale 1:10

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INSTALLATION, MATERIALS, AND MAINTENANCE
MTO, Typical Post Mounting Detail

A Connector Plate
- 12mm x 140mm x 6mm thick galvanized connector plate with 4 holes (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

B Aluminum Graphic Panel
- 6mm thick aluminum graphic panel painted (design varies)

C Aluminum Rectangular Tube
- 152mm x 76mm x 6mm thick aluminum rectangular aluminum tube which weld to aluminum graphic panel (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

D Aluminum Angle Bracket
- 6mm thick aluminum angle bracket vertical aluminum angle bracket which weld both to aluminum graphic panel and rectangular tubes (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

E Galvanized Fastener
- M16 x 40mm long, with 100mm dia. galvanized fastener with nut and washer-counter sink into post (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

F Galvanized Fastener
- M20 x 40mm dia. galvanized fastener with nut and washer (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

G Splice Plate
- 6mm x 150mm x 6mm thick galvanized splice plate (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

H Wood Post
- 140mm x 140mm pressure treated Douglas Fir posts with angle cut at top (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

I Granular Compacted FB
- 150mm thick granular foundation with compacted granular "A" fill. (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

J Break Off Holes
- 15mm dia. break off holes through post (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

K Galvanized Fastener
- M12 x 40mm dia. galvanized fastener with nut and washer (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

L Overturn Resistance Lumber Footing
- 140mm x 140mm Douglas Fir lumber footing with angle cut at top and sides (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

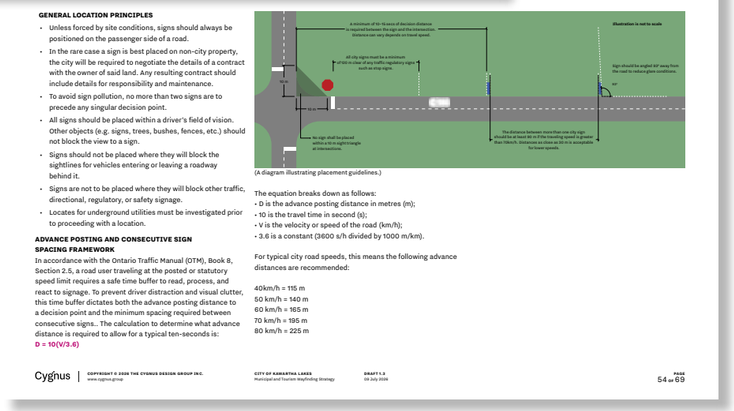
M Galvanized Bolts
- M16 X 400 galvanized ASSTM bolts (Confirm with Structural Engineer).

N Granular "A" Overfill
- 150mm compacted "A" approx. 450mm for sodded Layout

O Saw Cut
- 50mm deep saw cut (Confirm with Structural Engineer)

Values
Splice location
Section Detail
SCALE: 1:5
Section Detail
SCALE: 1:10

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GENERAL LOCATION PRINCIPLES
- Unless forced by site conditions, signs should always be positioned on the passenger side of a road.
- In the rare case a sign is best placed on non-city property, the city will be required to negotiate the details of a contract with the owner of said land. Any resulting contract should include details for responsibility and maintenance.
- To avoid sign pollution, no more than two signs are to precede any singular decision point.
- All signs should be placed within a driver's field of vision. Other objects (e.g. signs, trees, bushes, fences, etc.) should not block the view to a sign.
- Signs should not be placed where they will block the sightlines for vehicles entering or leaving a roadway behind it.
- Signs are not to be placed where they will block other traffic, directional, regulatory, or safety signage.
- Locates for underground utilities must be investigated prior to proceeding with a location.

ADVANCE POSTING AND CONSECUTIVE SIGN SPACING FRAMEWORK

In accordance with the Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM), Book 8, Section 2.5, a road user traveling at the posted or statutory speed limit requires a safe time buffer to read, process, and react to signage. To prevent driver distraction and visual clutter, this time buffer dictates both the advance posting distance to a decision point and the minimum spacing required between consecutive signs.. The calculation to determine what advance distance is required to allow for a typical ten-seconds is:

D = 10(V/3.6)

Illustration is not to scale
A minimum of 10–15 secs of decision distance is required between the sign and the intersection. Distance can vary depends on travel speed.
All city signs must be a minimum of 600 m clear of traffic regulatory signs such as stop signs
Sign should be angled 30° away from the road to reduce glare conditions.
Stop
10 to 15 m
No sign shall be placed within a 15 m sight triangle at intersections.
The distance between more than one city sign should be at least 30 m if the travelling speed is greater than 50km/h. Distances as close as 30 m is acceptable for lower speeds.

(A diagram illustrating placement guidelines.)

The equation breaks down as follows:
- D is the advance posting distance in metres (m);
- 10 is the travel time in second (s);
- V is the velocity or speed of the road (km/h);
- 3.6 is a constant (3600 s/h divided by 1000 m/km).

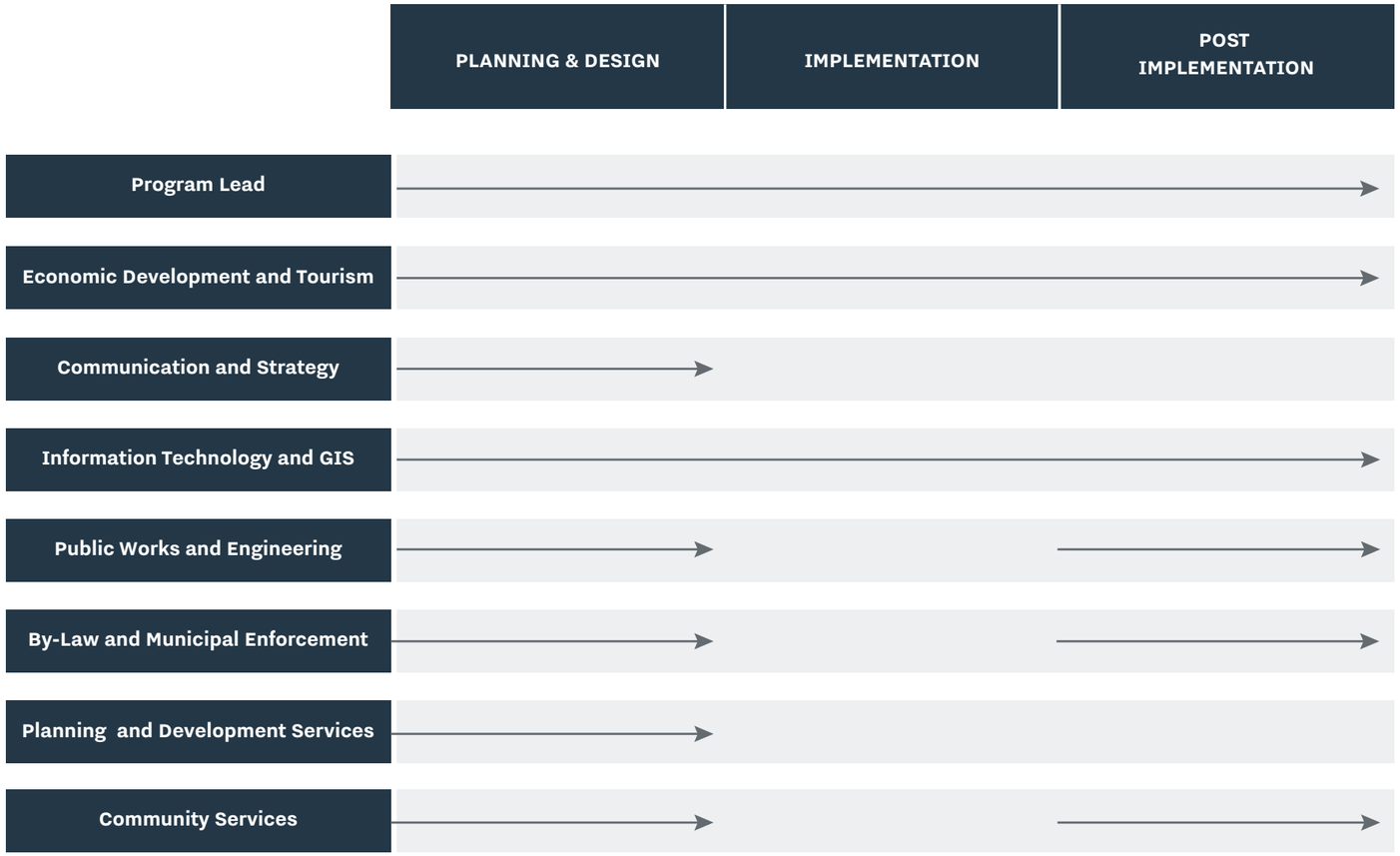
For typical city road speeds, this means the following advance distances are recommended:

40km/h = 115 m
50 km/h = 140 m
60 km/h = 165 m
70 km/h = 195 m
80 km/h = 225 m

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Governance and Success.

Utilizing department specialization for a successful, well coordinated wayfinding system across the system lifecycle.



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Implementation Plan

The City of Kawartha Lakes Wayfinding Strategy is intended to be implemented through a phased approached based on the City's priorities.

This strategy identifies a set of implementation priorities that have been determined through engagement with the City and community. These priorities are informed by the background review and are intended to:

- Supporting local businesses by making downtown areas, cultural sites, and tourist attractions easy to find.
- A cohesive brand that unifies all communities of Kawartha Lakes.
- Provide a unified and trustworthy navigational experience for visitors.

To support consistent implementation, the Wayfinding Strategy:

- Prioritizes a "progressive disclosure" model—regional destinations first, then local landmarks, then specific parking/services.
- Establishing a unified system starting with municipal borders and tier 1 communities and continuing to expand the network in subsequent phases.

To support future planning, cost ranges for each priority are provided as Class D estimates. These are high-level, preliminary figures based on a broad set of assumptions; they represent an order-of-magnitude outlook rather than committed budgets or approved funding. Implementation for each phase is estimated to take two years.

Phase 1: Tier 1 Community Gateway Signs, Tier 1 vehicular directional signs and Municipal Gateway Signs

Focusing on the highest-priority signage to create a consistent identity, improve navigation, and establish the foundation for the wayfinding system.

Improved Vehicular Navigation
- Introducing clear, strategically placed vehicular directional signs along primary routes to guide residents and visitors to major destinations, settlement areas, and civic amenities.

Consistent Experience
- Applying a unified visual language to ensure a recognizable and seamless experience regardless of the direction of travel.

Asset Foundation
- Establishing the primary wayfinding framework that future pedestrian signage, downtown kiosks, and tier 1 & 2 directional signs will build upon.

Class D Cost Estimate
$1,130,000

Phase 2: Tier 1 Community Pedestrian Wayfinding and Tier 2 Community Gateway Signs

Improving navigation within communities and creating a connected experience between arrival points and key destinations.

Pedestrian Navigation
- Installing clear, easy-to-follow pedestrian signs that help residents and visitors navigate downtown areas, parks, trails, and community destinations.

Community Identity
- Adding Tier 2 Community Gateway Signs to reinforce the unique character of each settlement area while maintaining a consistent municipal identity.

Connected Destinations
- Linking gateways, parking areas, downtowns, trails, and civic destinations through a coordinated wayfinding system that makes moving through the community simple and intuitive.

Class D Cost Estimate
$1,170,400

Phase 3: Tier 2 Community Vehicular and Pedestrian Wayfinding

This phase extends the wayfinding network into tier 2 communities ensuring the same navigational clarity found in major centers is extended.

Navigational Continuity
- This phase implements the navigational "spine" for secondary communities/

Predictable Experience
- The system maintains branding consistency across smaller locales and the transition from rural roads to local sidewalks remains familiar and reliable.

Eliminating Rural Dead Ends
- Clearly marking services, small-town shops, and park entries, the system prevents navigational gaps in the municipality's more remote areas.

Class D Cost Estimate
$319,440

Phase 4: Directional Signage Between Communities

This phase bridges the gaps between settlement areas, ensuring a continuous navigational thread across the municipality's rural road network.

Regional Continuity
- Placing directional signage at key rural intersections, the system guides and highlights travelers smoothly from one community to the next.

Consistent Rural Branding
- Whether traveling between Omemee and Bobcaygeon or through the northern reaches, the familiar "Kawartha Blue" signage provides a reliable visual cue that travelers are still on the right path.

Closing the Distance Gaps
- Clearly marking directions to upcoming villages, services, and regional attractions, this phase eliminates "middle-of-nowhere" uncertainty. It ensures that rural corridors act as connectors providing a seamless journey across the entire municipality.

Class D Cost Estimate
$903,430

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Cygnus

www.cygnus.group

Calgary
115-301, 14th Street NW
Calgary, AB T2N 2A1

403-371-2101

calgary@cygnus.group

Toronto
303-145 Front Street East
Toronto, ON M5A 1E3

416-728-3847

toronto@cygnus.group

Vancouver
606-318 Homer Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 2V2

604-261-3330

vancouver@cygnus.group

Victoria
202-1005 Broad Street
Victoria, BC V8W 2A1

778-265-9100

victoria@cygnus.group