

# Toronto Parks & Trails Wayfinding Strategy (Phase Two)

June 2015 Digital Wayfinding Group Meeting Summary

June 17, 2015

Metro Hall – 55 John St Toronto, ON M5V 3C6

Room 305, 3:00 –4:45 pm

## 1. Overview

On Wednesday, June 17, 2015, seven people participated in the third Digital Wayfinding Group meeting for Phase Two of Parks and Trails Wayfinding Strategy hosted by the City of Toronto's Parks, Forestry, and Recreation Division. Meeting participants included representatives from CNIB, the Safari Walking Group, the Parks, Forestry, and Recreation Disability Steering Committee, various City Divisions, and the consultant team working on the project. The purpose of the meeting was to review and discuss: the draft recommendations for the City's future Digital Wayfinding Service and the proposed description and features for the service.

Ian Malczewski of Swerhun Facilitation prepared this summary and shared it with participants for review before finalizing it. The purpose of the summary is to highlight key themes of the discussion and to summarize feedback collected during and after the meeting. It is structured to reflect the following main areas of discussion:

1. Overview
2. Key Messages
3. Feedback
  - 3.1. Recommendations for the Digital Wayfinding Service
  - 3.2. Description and features of the Digital Wayfinding Service
4. Other feedback
5. Next Steps

Please note that the meeting agenda is included as Attachment 1 and the list of meeting participants as Attachment 2 to this summary.

## 2. Key Messages

These Key Messages reflect common themes that emerged in discussions at the meeting. They should be read in concert with the more detailed summary of feedback below.

**The proposed information priorities, places to deliver information, and ways to deliver information sound right.** Participants were very happy with the draft recommendations and commended the City and the team on its work.

**Make sure the data requirements are realistic and reliable.** The City doesn't have data for some of the proposed information priorities, so the consulting team needs to be

clear what additional data the City needs to collect (and how). Wherever possible, make sure the data comes from reliable, City sources.

**It's important that people can use the service to download information at home**, such as maps or park descriptions. Any downloadable information should be available in plain text.

### 3. Feedback

Participants shared feedback about two topics: the Draft Recommendations to inform the Digital Wayfinding Service, and the proposed description and features of the Digital Wayfinding Service itself.

#### 3.1 Feedback about the draft recommendations

Craig Nelson, the consultant from Steer Davies Gleave leading the digital wayfinding component of the wayfinding strategy, presented draft recommendations, which covered:

- Proposed information priorities for the Digital Wayfinding Service
- Proposed locations users of the Digital Wayfinding Service could access information
- Proposed ways that the Digital Wayfinding Service could deliver information.

Participants gave feedback about each of these three topics.

#### Information priorities for the Digital Wayfinding Service

**The proposed categories for information priorities are great.** Participants really liked the presented categories of accessibility, planning and routing, park facilities, exploring, and learning. "If you keep that model and go with it for the next 50 years, you won't go wrong," said one participant.

**Make sure the data is reliable.** Participants said that it was important that the information priorities focus on information that it's possible to keep up to date. One person cautioned that activities and events are very difficult to track. Another said there could be challenges providing the information given that the City does not have reliable data for all the proposed priorities. Finally, one person said the City would need to make sure it's connecting with other companies that provide data (like NavTech) to make sure the information is consistent across platforms. *Craig Nelson replied that the recommendations will identify which information categories should be top priorities for the City to compile or enhance.*

**Integration with social platforms is a good idea.** Participants liked that the priorities proposed drawing on Google Field Trip and Four Square data.

**Suggested additional information.** Participants identified some other kinds of information to include, such as:

- Whether a park has electric plug-ins (for battery operated wheelchairs)
- The number of accessible parking spots in a park's parking lot
- Whether a park has lighting (for safety reasons)
- Whether a park has accessible washrooms

**Connect the service to 311.** Participants thought it would be great if the Digital Wayfinding Service could connect to 311 so that people could report maintenance or safety issues to the City.

**Have you thought about all the different systems you need to interface with to provide this information?** *Craig Nelson replied that he has developed recommendations for where the information could come from (such as the TTC's NextBus data) so that vendors bidding to develop the service would have a sense of where they could get data. He said he didn't want to be too prescriptive so that vendors could bring their own ideas.*

### Proposed places for information

**The proposed locations are great.** Participants felt that the proposed places for users to get information—at home, en route to the park, and at the park—were perfect.

**Make sure that information can be downloaded at home** since some people will prefer to take the information with them or might not have access to a wireless data connection while on the go. This information should not be included in PDFs since PDFs are hard for screen reader—plain text is better. People should be able to get information in hard copies, and there should be descriptive messaging for any images so that people of all abilities can access it.

### Proposed ways the service could deliver information

**The proposed ways to deliver information are right.** Participants especially liked that the team had prioritized putting information on the City's website.

**Add iBeacons to the list of ways to deliver information.**

**Develop a tactile element to help people understand information.** One participant said it would be great if there were a way to print something that could be stuck on top of touchscreens so that people could rely on a tactile experience on their smartphone. *Craig Nelson replied that there are interesting concepts that use haptic feedback on touchscreens to give tactile feedback on touchscreens, but that they are still prototypes.*

## 3.2 Feedback about the proposed description and features

Craig Nelson reviewed a proposed description for the service and its features, which vendors bidding to develop a pilot of the service would use as a basis for their proposals.

Generally, participants said the description and features were on the right track and said they would find the service very useful.

One participant said the Request for Proposals that would go out to vendors must ask for examples the vendor's previous work since the City is finding that many vendors are claiming they know how to make accessible documents but don't know how.

Participants also said that **upgradability** should be an important feature. *Craig Nelson added that the Request for Proposals would require user testing and the pilot project will serve as a beta test to see what features should be upgraded or carried forward on a city-wide basis.*

Another suggestion was that **the description be more stringent on requiring the City's data**. The service could use open data where there isn't City data available, but the City should not rely exclusively on data provided by others (especially for things as important as emergency services).

Finally, participants suggested some additional features for the team to consider adding:

- A way to share your location to someone in case you're not feeling well or need some help. *Janette Harvey replied that the City has initiated a pilot project for Emergency Services Wayfinding to improve the City's capacity to respond to emergencies and non-emergency/incidents in its parks. and said the City will explore connecting that pilot to the Digital Wayfinding Service.*
- A way to share trips or routes.
- An "etiquette-enforcing" feature that would encourage park and trail visitors to stay on marked paths

## 6. Next steps

Ian Malczewski thanked the group for their time and participation in the process. Craig Nelson also thanked the group, saying he learned a great deal through the process. He added that he would make some revisions based on their feedback in his final recommendations. Finally, Janette Harvey thanked everyone and committed to sharing updates with them as the next steps of work unfolded. She also said she would bring the final recommendations before the broader PFR Disability Steering Committee and would involve the group in the pilot implementation.

## Attachment 1. Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Room 305, Metro Hall – 55 John Street

3:00 – 5:00 pm

### PROPOSED AGENDA

*Purpose: To review and discuss draft recommendations for the Digital Wayfinding Service specification and its proposed description and key features.*

3:00 Welcome, Agenda Review, and Introductions

City of Toronto & Swerhun Facilitation

3:10 Overview: Work Done Since April & Draft Recommendations

SDG

*Questions of Clarification*

3:30 Discussion: Draft Recommendations

*1. What do you think of these draft recommendations for the Digital Wayfinding Service specification? What do you think is missing (if anything)?*

4:00 Overview: Proposed Description and Features for the Digital Wayfinding Service

4:20 Discussion: Proposed Description and Features for the Digital Wayfinding Service

*2. Given the description and key features, does the proposed service sound like it would be useful to you?*

*3. Is there anything you would like to suggest adding to the description / key features?*

4:40 Wrap Up and Next Steps

4:45 Adjourn

Attachment 2. List of Participants

**City of Toronto Geospatial Competency Centre:** Scott Webb

**City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation:** Chris Green

**City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation:** Janette Harvey

**City of Toronto:** Lorene Bodiam

**City of Toronto Transportation Services:** Chris Ronson

**CNIB:** Debbie Gillespie

**The Safari Walking Group:** Craig Nicol

**Steer Davies Gleave:** James Brown

**Steer Davies Gleave:** Craig Nelson

**Swerhun Facilitation:** Ian Malczewski

**Swerhun Facilitation:** Yulia Pak