

## Staff Report

---

**Report To:** City Council

**Report From:** Brent Fisher, Manager of Community and Business Development

**Meeting Date:** July 19, 2021

**Report Code:** CS-21-106

**Subject:** Wayfinding Signage Project and Funding Agreement

---

### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-21-106 respecting Wayfinding Signage Project and Funding Agreement, City Council directs staff to bring forward a by-law to authorize the execution of the RT07 funding agreement.

### Highlights:

- Wayfinding Signage includes both vehicular wayfinding as well as pedestrian wayfinding signage.
- Wayfinding Signage educates local front-line employees of what you have to offer and where it's located.
- One of the high priority actions from the River District Action Plan is the preparation of a wayfinding strategy for the River District.
- Wayfinding Signage should meet AODA and MTO standards.

### Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: City Building - KR2 - Increase pedestrian counts in the River District by 10%

## **Background:**

In 2020, Council approved the installation of 26 wayfinding signs, produced and installed in accordance with the [RTO7 Wayfinding Signage Standard and Specifications](#) for Bruce, Grey, and Simcoe Counties.

RTO7's Wayfinding Signage Standard and Specifications for Bruce, Grey, and Simcoe Counties, last updated in 2017 provides Municipalities guidance and templates for wayfinding signage regarding:

- Layout and Design;
- Signage type based on location and purpose;
- Roadway placement and MTO requirements;
- Accessibility Standards and AODA Compliance;
- Installation and Fabrication; and
- Differentiation between public destinations and for-profit destinations.

To be eligible for [RTO7 Signage Partnership Funding](#) the City adopted the RTO7 guidelines in 2020.

The 26 signs have been installed in key locations outside of the River District (Attachment 1) where current wayfinding signage was damaged and required immediate replacement. These signs will be considered as part of the overall strategy.

In 2021, Council and the Owen Sound River District Board of Management approved the [River District Action Plan](#). One of the recommendations within the River District Action Plan for year one is to undertake a River District Wayfinding Signage Plan. Council has approved \$60,000 in the [2021 Capital Budget](#) to support this initiative.

## **Analysis:**

Wayfinding signage is an important tool for pedestrian and vehicular traffic that contributes to a sense of place, well-being, safety, and security in a community. A professionally developed wayfinding signage strategy consistent with RTO7 standards will assist the City and River District Board of Management in developing signage and information systems for both pedestrians and motorists, who each have unique needs navigating streets, parking, sidewalks, and trail systems.

The RTO7 Wayfinding Signage Standard and Specifications guide the appearance and engineering components of the sign but does not consider

placement or layout within a municipality. The City does not currently have a wayfinding signage strategy that considers the needs of motorists, pedestrians, parks and trail users. When paired with the RTO7 Wayfinding Signage Standard and Specifications, a professionally developed wayfinding signage strategy will:

- Identify additional key decision points.
- Ensure that City wayfinding signage connects with all other systems ie. Grey County/Province.
- Guide visibility and placement while considering MTO and AODA standards.
- Identify gaps and opportunities in City and River District signage.
- Create a systematic and uniform approach for all messaging, providing guidance and direction for the future placement of wayfinding and informational signage throughout the City.

With having adopted the RTO7 guidelines in 2020, the City is eligible to receive RTO7 partnership funding to conduct a wayfinding signage strategy throughout the entire City. RTO7 has provided funding of up to \$20,000, or one-third of the cost, whichever is less to conduct the wayfinding signage strategy.

Council has budgeted \$60,000 for Wayfinding Signage in 2021. Staff is proposing the project budget upset limit for the strategy be \$40,000 with the balance of the 2021 budgeted funds being carried over to 2022 for implementation of the new signage.

## **Financial Implications:**

Council approved \$60,000 for wayfinding signage in the 2021 Capital Budget. RTO7 would contribute up to \$20,000, or one-third of the project cost, whichever is less.

Staff is recommending a project upset limit of \$40,000. One-third of the project cost will be supported by the RTO7 partnership funds, leaving funds remaining for implementation in 2022. As an example, if the study is \$40,000, \$26,800 would be from the 2021 capital project with \$13,200 from RTO7. \$33,200 would be carried forward for implementation in 2022.

Council may request that the River District Board of Management consider a partnership on wayfinding signage implementation in the 2022 River District budget.

## **Communication Strategy:**

City staff will work within the City's Purchasing By-law to secure a consulting firm to carry out the project. The firm will engage with staff across City departments, including Parks, By-law, Engineering, Planning, and the River District Board of Management for input in the development of the strategy.

## **Consultation:**

Alex Hogan, RTO7

Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services

## **Attachments:**

1. Location of Installed Signs

## **Recommended by:**

Brent Fisher, Manager of Community & Business Development

## **Reviewed by:**

Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services

## **Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Brent Fisher, Manager of Community & Business Development at [bfisher@owensound.ca](mailto:bfisher@owensound.ca) or 519-376-4440 ext 1254.