

IMAP Implementation Committee

Progress Report – Melbourne Visitor Signage project

Strategy 11: Promote the inner Melbourne region as a tourist destination Action 2.2: Coordinated pedestrian and public transport signage system

PURPOSE

1. To update the IMAP Implementation Committee on the work of the Melbourne Visitor Signage Committee.

BACKGROUND

1. Wayfinding signage is a key to visitor satisfaction and to ensuring the visitor economy benefits local businesses and the community.
2. Visitors to Melbourne rely on several different signage systems to explore the destination, in particular on roads, public transport, pedestrian, street directional and tourism signs. Each of these systems has its own look and feel; its own mapping style, symbols and language; and its own infrastructure in the city's streets.
3. In 2012, the CEOs of the Melbourne Tourism Partnership¹ established the Melbourne Visitor Signage Committee to work on improving wayfinding signage used by visitors to Melbourne.
4. At its December 2012 meeting, the IMAP Implementation Committee approved IMAP councils contributing a provisional sum of \$20,000 each towards the development of a consistent inner Melbourne signage strategy and style guide as part of the work of the Melbourne Visitor Signage Committee.

DISCUSSION

1. The Melbourne Visitor Signage Committee comprises representatives of the five inner Melbourne councils, Public Transport Victoria, VicRoads, Tourism Victoria and, more recently, the City of Wyndham.
2. Amongst other things, the committee's role is to improve orientation information at Melbourne's entry points and build 'common threads' between the signage systems visitors rely on (walking, public transport and roads).
3. The committee's first action is to build a Master Style Guide setting out agreed signing principles, guidelines and language (the 'business rules') to be adopted by collaborating authorities.
4. The master style guide aims to improve the consistency of the content carried by key signage systems in order to encourage exploration, improve connectivity, give visitors the confidence to stray from well worn paths and prompt them to spend more time in Melbourne's many attractions.
5. This agreed approach to signing is being developed and tested in inner Melbourne and, subject to agreement, in the City of Wyndham. The aim is that an agreed approach eventually be adopted across greater Melbourne.
6. The Master Style Guide will comprise two sections: *Strategy* and *Implementation*. The committee completed the first draft of the *Strategy* section in June 2014, and work started in July 2014 on *Implementation*.
7. *Strategy* includes: the vision for Melbourne, a case study of a good wayfinding system (*Legible London*) and principles for Melbourne's wayfinding signage. Of interest, the committee has proposed six signing principles:

¹ City of Melbourne, Tourism Victoria, Victorian Major Events Company, Melbourne Convention Bureau and Destination Melbourne.

Melbourne Visitor Signage committee: Helen Hardwick (Project manager, CoM), **IMAP** David Morison (CoY), Leigh Abernethy (CoPP), Tom Haysom (CoS), Richard Greig (CoM), Mal McDonald (Maribyrnong), Elissa McElroy; **VicRoads** Alan King, and Thuan Nguyen; **PTV** Kaye Tuddenham and Jessica Wickham; **Tourism Victoria** Richard Price and Stuart Toplis; **City of Wyndham** Sofia Anapliotis/Kate Lind.

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- a. Focus on the users
 - b. Reduce clutter
 - c. Disclose information progressively
 - d. Create connectivity
 - e. Be consistent
 - f. Use resources efficiently
8. *Implementation* will comprise:
- a. Signage content including: naming conventions, selection criteria, symbols and arrows, and language
 - b. Signage locations including: frequency and siting
 - c. Infrastructure including: shared infrastructure and a proposed system trial.
9. When completed, the draft Master Style Guide will be submitted to each of the participating nine authorities for consideration and, hopefully, adoption.
10. To date, the following amounts have been drawn from funds approved by the IMAP Implementation Committee:
- \$19,000 for development, writing and editing work on the draft Strategy (consultant: Lisa Bigelow)
- \$24,000 for a content review of signage manuals, guidelines and other material used by the nine authorities for decisions relating to language, naming, selection criteria, symbols, visual execution and digital/physical application. The consultant (David Nash) will produce a report detailing similarities in approach, differences and gaps in the material used by the nine authorities. This information will be benchmarked against *Legible London's* approach.
11. The content review report will be completed by end of September. Two workshops will then be held for the committee in October and November to agree on content to be included in the Master Style Guide.
12. Work that will be undertaken in 2015 includes developing proposed shared visual language (symbols and arrows) and on the Signage locations and Infrastructure elements of the Master Style Guide's *Implementation* section.

RECOMMENDATION

13. That IMAP Implementation Committee note the report of the Coordinating Committee's work.

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