

Inner Melbourne Action Plan Action 2.2

Wayfinding Pedestrian Signage Evaluation

May 2010

Background

The Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) Action 2.2, sought to introduce a consistent pedestrian wayfinding signage system across the Inner Melbourne Region to show that the Region and its constituent “precincts” are accessible throughout by walking, cycling and public transport. The Inner Melbourne Wayfinding Signage, as it is now known, highlights key regional linkages and places of interest, as well as giving people public transport information and indicative walking times. The signage therefore is about making it easier for people to navigate within and between city “precincts” and about encouraging them to do so on foot or by public transport.

The Inner Melbourne Wayfinding Signage is an initiative of the Inner Melbourne Action Plan, specifically Action 2.2. In 2006, the councils of Melbourne, Port Phillip, Stonnington and Yarra in partnership with the State Government, launched ‘Making Melbourne More Liveable - Inner Melbourne Action Plan’. The Plan, prepared collaboratively to respond to ‘Melbourne 2030’, provides a framework for the future growth and development of the Inner Melbourne Region. It also aims to make the area more vibrant, liveable, accessible and creative.

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The IMAP Region contains up to 35 recognisable precincts. These are linked together by a system of public transport routes (train, tram and bus), walking and cycling routes and shared off-road paths which are signed by the Metlink signage system, and which are illustrated on public transport, TravelSmart, tourist and various other maps. However, the existing signage was found to be fragmented and many inter-precinct walking routes were not signed for pedestrians. The illustration of the availability of these good walking links is a new and innovative element of the Inner Melbourne Wayfinding Signage system.

The project involved two distinct stages, both of which entailed a high level of innovation and engagement on the part of Council staff, as well as Visual Voice, the appointed consultants:

- **Stage 1:** produced an Inner Melbourne Way-finding Signage Report completed in December 2007. The Report outlined an “integrated wayfinding signage strategy” that recommended both the types of signs that need to be installed, and the locations where they need to be installed along a demonstration project route. The nominated demonstration route covers the activity centre precincts of Bridge Road, Swan Street, Church Street, and Chapel Street, three recreation precincts (the Sports & Entertainment, Fawkner Park and Botanical Gardens precincts) and the walking and other transport links between them.
- **Stage 2:** constituted the delivery of signage along the demonstration route. This involved design, manufacture and installation of sign hardware, as well as design of regional and precinct maps and their content. Stage 2 also included evaluation of the signage system and the maps.

The overall objective of actual map design was to overcome barriers to walking - “it’s too far to walk”; “it will take too long”; “not sure of the way”; and to integrate public transport information, with walking routes and precinct information. The result is a signage system based on world’s best practice wayfinding design, pioneered in Bristol United Kingdom, involving a “family” or hierarchy of four sign types: Level 1 and 2 are “heads-up” map based signs; and Level 3 and 4 are directional and route marker signs.

Method

The IMAP Wayfinding Signage group sought the assistance of the City of Melbourne’s ‘red coat’ visitor guides in evaluating the demonstration wayfinding signage system for pedestrians across the Inner Melbourne Region.

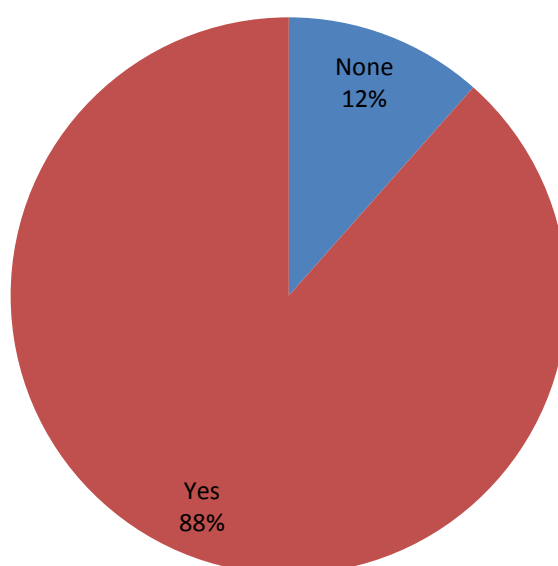
They were given a survey (Appendix 1), and asked to walk some or all of the route. Their instructions were to walk the route with an eye for the visitor. See information given to the participants in Appendix 2.

Key Results

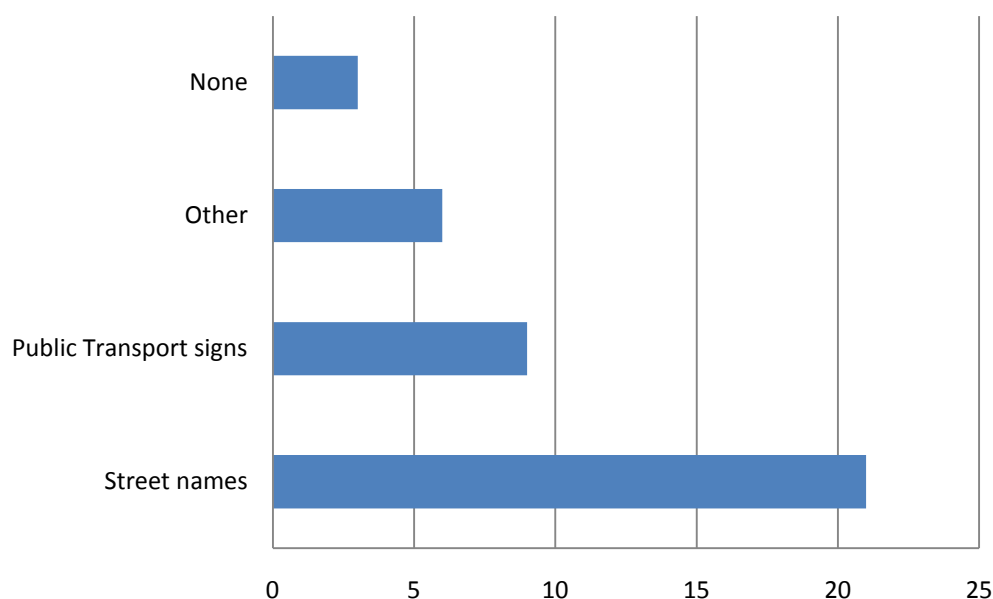
Whilst the quantitative data on whether people were able to find their way around and what other signs they used is useful information; it was the qualitative information captured via the notes that was most interesting.

- 88% of those participating found they were able to find their way around and that it was easy to do.
- 88% of people also used other signage to assist them along the route. This indicates the importance of the need for the signs to ‘work with’ other infrastructure. The most commonly used other signage were street name signs and public transport signs.

Did you use any other on-street signage?



Which other signage did you use?



- 100% of those participating felt safe on the route. All walks were conducted in daylight hours.

The four key themes of the notes and comments were;

1. The large map signs were useful and easy to use
2. There could be more information added that tourists may find useful
3. The signs are already graffitied
4. The smaller signs between were too infrequent.

* Full detail in Appendix 3

Conclusions

The overwhelming message was positive. The signage is useful and generally well positioned. The maps in particular were seen as excellent and of use to visitors and tourists alike.

The three most useful topics for discussion for the IMAP Working Group as well as the Council's are:

1. The need to increase the frequency of the smaller signage
2. The maintenance of both the built infrastructure and the map over time, and
3. The need for the wayfinding signage to 'work with' public transport signage.

Appendix 3: Verbatim Comments

- *Fed Square sign could be moved to a more prominent position. Sign cnr Swan & Church has been vandalised. Signage very good - especially maps.*
- *Got lost in Chapel precinct. The larger signs - very impressive. Saw 3 signs already vandalised. Signs 3m off ground are too high. No connection between small yellow signs with arrow and walking man and other signage.*
- *All the area is well served by PT. There are a variety of shops tourists may be interested in.*
- *Many signs already graffitied, need good cleaning & maintenance regime. Not clearly for locals too - suggest promotion in local papers.*
- *When I was near the Swan St bridge I was asked for directions to the Botanic Gardens.*
- *Add baby change information. The walking man signage was better when there was more information. Otherwise - terrific.*
- *Whilst walking & carrying the map I was offered assistance twice - lovely and friendly!*
- *Toorak Rd signs - couldn't find them. Signs at Fawkner Park & Chapel St too small and obscure. - Some signs already damaged.*
- *Attachment*
- *Trouble in Fawkner Park area. Signs already damaged.*
- *Some signage of the signs. I.e. show family on larger maps.*
- *More smaller signs - too long between signs.*
- *Poor signage at Burnley Golf Club. I also used town halls, churches, hotels & Dimmeys. Add index, Prahran Market, Bus 246 & nightrider buses.*
- *I found the times on the signs useful & accurate.*
- *I had fun. I found I walked past a few of the bigger signs because I was looking for a big i.*
- *I liked the bigger signs, the smaller ones were too hard to see.*
- *Liked the maps near the trams stops.*
- *Give the information about the MCG at the intersection of Hoddle & Bridge*
- *Couldn't find sign in Lennox St*
- *I thought the large signs were informative and easy to read*
- *Signs too high - map to go with signage?*
- *Little signs need to be more frequent*
- *Add: train stations, train lines, tram stop numbers cinemas & hospitals*



Inner Melbourne Action Plan
'Making Melbourne More Liveable'



Thank you for your INVALUABLE assistance in evaluating the new wayfinding signage

The Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) group incorporates the cities of Melbourne, Stonnington, Yarra and Port Phillip. This group recently sought your assistance in evaluating the demonstration wayfinding signage system for pedestrians across the Inner Melbourne Region.

Thank you for your time and interest in the project. The information received was thoughtful, informative and incredibly thorough. This information is now being analysed and will form a part of the report to the Department of Transport to recommend further signs be installed and what changes need to be made to the demonstration route.

As a token of our appreciation please find a voucher for Readings Bookshop enclosed.

Thank you again,

IMAP Wayfinding Signage Working Group

If you have any other questions please contact:

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