MEETING MINUTES

date	Tuesday, November 10, 2020
time	10:00 AM – 11:35 AM
purpose	Workshop #1 - Research and Engagement Meeting Minutes
attendees	26

A virtual workshop was held on Tuesday, November 10, 2020 from 10:00 AM until 11:35 AM via Go To Meeting with key stakeholders and the following summarizes the discussion.

Introduction

- Christina welcomed everyone, introduced the project team, and discussed the purpose and goal of the workshop and the project.
- The workshop objectives include understanding the challenges when planning and implementing wayfinding, discussing the main difficulties and how they can be improved, and identifying ways to streamline the process.

Miro Board Introduction

- Melissa gave a brief introduction to Miro, which was used for three interactive exercises through the workshop.

Existing Conditions

- Adrian provided an overview of the existing conditions. He began by defining wayfinding and outlined the importance of wayfinding tools, talked about potential benefits such as economic development, increased tourism and encouraging people to move around.
- Adrian provided a snapshot of the various existing signs in the County and discussed their roles in marking Destinations and promoting Placemaking.
- Adrian shared highlights from a survey related to barriers to planning and implementing wayfinding that was previously sent out to various stakeholders. Survey responses agreed that other spending priorities, limited staff or lack of skills, lack of standard guidance, lack of planning coordination and lack of funding are potential barriers. It also showed good understanding of vehicular regulation but opportunities to clarify pedestrian and trail wayfinding.

Discussion question 1: What is your opinion about the role of wayfinding in the County?

- Bob Patten noted that wayfinding is very important for the County because of its large size and because it encompasses many different areas and communities. People generally know the areas near home, work and main travel routes but may not be as familiar with the surrounding areas. Primarily problem for bicyclists, transit and motorists. Pedestrian trips are typically short so don't require wayfinding but it is sometimes hard to pinpoint the route. Some barriers for

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pedestrians include the street pattern of older communities, and the interruption of routes by dead ends, rivers and railroad crossings.

- Michael Jackson agreed with Bob and added that there is value in a focus on pedestrian wayfinding. He shared a recent experience with someone asking for walking directions to the post office, where he used a nearby McDonalds as a landmark. Directional signs or maps to local destinations at a corner of a major intersection would have been beneficial in this case. He also noted that we have good wayfinding systems geared towards motorist and the same methodology could be used for shared paths and sidewalks.
- Steven Segerlin noted that recent Origin-Destination surveys by Metro revealed that many people who live within ½ mile to a mile from Prince George's Plaza and West Hyattsville stations drive there because they perceive the distance as much farther away and the safest and fastest path is not clear. Articulating distance and time on a signs could be beneficial to encourage walking and biking. Also mentioned that they are looking at digital kiosks to use as information hubs, and expressed interest in discussing the content curation of these.
- Bob Patten pointed to the example of having maps on the platforms and in the foyer in the Metro stations. However, people don't often start looking for directions until they have exited and are out on the street. Adrian noted the importance of the planning aspect of wayfinding. Bob also commented on the fact that the way the MUTCD is written implies that trails should use bikeway system, and doesn't acknowledge pedestrian use of trails.

Exercise 1: Who needs wayfinding?

- See MIRO Board

Guidelines

- Adrian discussed the regulatory and advisory bodies related to wayfinding and talked about the spectrum of how MUTCD applies to various signs and modes.

Discussion Question 2: What have your experience been of implementing wayfinding? What did you find easy/difficult?

- No comments received at the workshop. Participants were instructed to email questions to Christina.

Exercise 2: Guidelines

- See MIRO Board

Vision

- Adrian discussed the role of Countywide guidance and shared an example of bicycle guide signs from a report for Monterey County, CA. He mentioned the MUTCD and the MDOT SHA Bicycle Design guidelines and also talked about what potential tasks could Countywide guidelines fulfil. The possible roles include explaining how the current system works, providing guidelines for best practice on including brand and planning wayfinding within the regulatory framework, and preparing a design standard and system for wayfinding at the County level with specific templates and guidance on wayfinding for pedestrians, bicycling and trails.

Discussion Question 3: What questions would a countywide wayfinding guide answer for you? What consistent standards could it create?

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- Cicero Salles would like to see recommendation for types of key destinations to include. He mentioned a concern with sign clutter if standards encourage too much signage. He also recommended including guidance on how far destinations should be signed from for wayfindnig for different modes.
- Bob Patten mentioned the agency branding and identity. Bob also discussed the scenarios involving trail signing. Prince George's County trails sometimes run parallel to road and cross multiple jurisdictions and agencies. The guidelines should include recommendations on selecting information type, text sizes, sign color, etc based on the physical context of the location
- Noelle Smith noted that she agrees with Cicero and Bob on the need to include key destinations and branding and to develop a destination hierarchy. She recommended that regarding branding, guidance is given but there should be room for creativity.

Exercise 3: Consistency

- See MIRO Board

Summary and Next Steps

- Adrian summarized the discussion and outlined the next steps which include creating a document/guideline for how to use the existing system with a follow up workshop. Future phase 2 will develop a countywide toolkit for wayfinding.

Final Discussion

- Bob recommended that the guidelines include information on how any entity could go about implementing wayfinding such as what signs will need to be put up in a network, single vs. multimodal consideration, scoping, funding, limitations, etc. Stipulated that recommendations should be contextual to the environment in which signs are placed and flexible between locations.
- Michael Jackson shared his experience with familiarity with bicycle destination signs from serving on the NCUTCD Bicycle Technical committee and bicycle design work for the City of San Diego, CA. He recommended using control destination signage with intermittent points which has proven to work well.

Conclusion

- Christina thanked everyone for attending and asked that any follow up questions are emailed to her. The Workshop was adjourned at 11:35 am.

Key Takeaways

- **Exercise 1- Who needs wayfinding?**
  - **Findings-**
    - Driving (Ranked Priorities-1 Highest, 4 Lowest)
      - Help local residents choose the best way to commute
        - Majority 3, Average 3
      - Help new residents understand how to get around the county
        - Majority 1, Average 1.9
      - Promote county destinations to visitors and tourists
        - Majority 2, Average 2.1
      - Encourage people to get outside or to exercise

- o Majority 4, Average 3.3
  - ▪ Transit (Ranked Priorities-1 Highest, 4 Lowest)
    - <mark>● Help local residents choose the best way to commute</mark>
      - o Majority 1, Average 1.2
    - ● Help new residents understand how to get around the county
      - o Majority 2, Average 1.9
    - ● Promote county destinations to visitors and tourists
      - o Majority 3, Average 2.9
    - ● Encourage people to get outside or to exercise
      - o Majority 4, Average 3.6
  - ▪ Bicycle (Ranked Priorities-1 Highest, 4 Lowest)
    - ● Help local residents choose the best way to commute
      - o No Strong Majority, Average 2.6
    - ● Help new residents understand how to get around the county
      - o Majority 3, Average 2.8
    - ● Promote county destinations to visitors and tourists
      - o No Strong Majority, Average 2.9
    - <mark>● Encourage people to get outside or to exercise</mark>
      - o Majority 1, Average 1.7
  - ▪ Walking (Ranked Priorities-1 Highest, 4 Lowest)
    - ● Help local residents choose the best way to commute
      - o No Strong Majority, Average 2.7
    - ● Help new residents understand how to get around the county
      - o No Strong Majority, Average 2.6
    - ● Promote county destinations to visitors and tourists
      - o Majority 2, Average 2.7
    - <mark>● Encourage people to get outside or to exercise</mark>
      - o Majority 1, Average 2.3
- **Exercise 2- Guidelines**
  - o **Findings**
    - ▪ In regards to *Who do you believe controls bicycle standards?*, The majority of participants felt that the state controlled Sign materials, Sign shapes, Colors, and Fonts and pictograms.
    - ▪ Primarily participants felt that the County controls the County Destination and Networks.
    - ▪ The majority of answers indicated that the local jurisdiction controls the Local destination and Maps and graphics.
    - ▪ Participants indicated that Sign Location is determined, somewhat evenly, by the State, County, and local jurisdictions.
- **Exercise 3 – Consistency**
  - o **Findings**
    - ▪ Identity and Brand were spread from 3-10 for importance.

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- Sign Design was spread between 4 and 8.5 for importance.
- Arrows, Icons and symbols skewed heavily towards 8-10 for importance.
- Destinations were distributed between 4 and 10 with a dense cluster at 9/10 for importance.
- Placement was spread from 4-10 of importance with higher density around 8-10.

- **Overall**
  - There was about a 70% turnout from the Eventbrite acceptances.
  - Of those that attended, it seems that about half participated in Exercises.