

To: Members of Dublin City Council
From: Dana L. McDaniel, City Manager
Date: June 12, 2015
Initiated By: Steve Langworthy, Planning Director
 Terry Foegler, Director of Strategic Initiatives/Special Projects
 Jeannie Willis, PE, Engineering Manager
Re: Wayfinding

Background

At the City Council Work Session held on April 6, 2015, the City's wayfinding consultant, Kolar Design, provided an update for the work that had been completed at that time. Before any implementation actions can occur, City Council has requested to review the sign packages applicable to this effort. Once approved, staff can begin providing additional implementation steps and costs.

The wayfinding sign program has three main parts: traffic control signs (e.g. stop signs, lane control signs) wayfinding signs (identifying major destinations), and signs that have both wayfinding and traffic control elements.

Traffic Control Signs (Bridge Street District only)

Kolar Design has suggested a unique look for traffic control signs in the Bridge Street District. The proposed changes add a thicker black border fitting around the existing signs and uses a round post instead of a square post with a new break away foundation connection. This design does not propose that the City depart from the standard traffic control signs required in the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (OMUTCD), as shown in Figure 1. The traffic control sign system used in the remainder of the City would remain unchanged from the current standard.

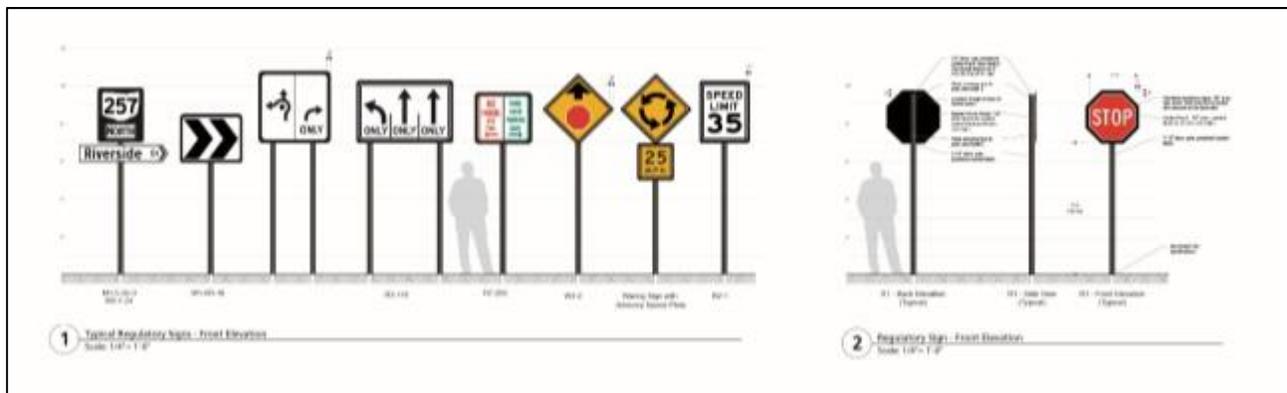


Figure 1: Proposed BSD Traffic Control Sign Package

At the same Work Session, Council requested information regarding the color scheme change to the Street Name Signs in Historic Dublin. These changes are necessary due to a 2012 update to the OMUTCD. In order to comply with new Federal requirements, this change excludes the current color scheme used on the street name signs in Historic Dublin. Accordingly, Staff is presenting a new sign design.

The existing signs are shown in Figure 2. There are three elements that change under the new requirements: background color, lettering height, and lettering case.

1. The background color of the existing signs is black. The new requirements allow green, blue, brown or white backgrounds. When the background is white, the lettering and border must be black.
2. The lettering height on the existing signs is four-inches. For streets like Bridge Street and High Street with speed limits between 25 and 40 mph, lettering must be six inches. Four-inch lettering is still allowed on streets with speed limits of 25 mph or lower.
3. The lettering case on the existing signs is all upper-case. New signs are required to use mixed-case letter, or a combination of lower-case with initial upper-case letters.



Figure 2: Existing Street Name Sign
in Historic Dublin



Figure 3: Proposed Street Name Sign in Bridge
Street District

A sign layout meeting these new requirements is shown in Figure 3. The proposed sign uses black text on a white background and six-inch lettering using mixed cases. The final sign layout, post and cap will be consistent with design elements developed by Kolar during the Wayfinding project.

There is no time frame to change the existing Street Name Signs to the new color scheme. The existing signs are allowed to remain in place until the end of their useful life. Staff will incorporate the Wayfinding design through development and Capital Improvement projects and as Street Name Signs need to be replaced.

The City's standard street name signs outside of Historic Dublin comply with the new color requirements. The lettering height and case will be updated on the brown street name signs as they are replaced through routine maintenance.

Wayfinding Signs

The next category of signs is for wayfinding purposes. As noted in the Kolar presentation, the wayfinding signs provide "bread crumbs" to those destinations deemed to have the largest potential audiences, or a high level of importance to the community. There are to be three design formats for the signs: Historic Dublin Entry, Historic Dublin Wayfinding, and Standard Wayfinding.

Historic Dublin Entry

The entries to Historic Dublin are currently identified by a series of eight concrete obelisks (Figure 4), one on each side of the streets entering the District. In past reviews of these entry signs, comments included thoughts that the markers looked too much like cemetery monuments, and that they “gave the impression of a ‘dead town’.” Markers of a similar but smaller design were historically used as street signs which may make them reminiscent of past use, but as historic districts became more of a unique attraction different marker styles evolved.



Figure 4: Existing Historic Dublin ID

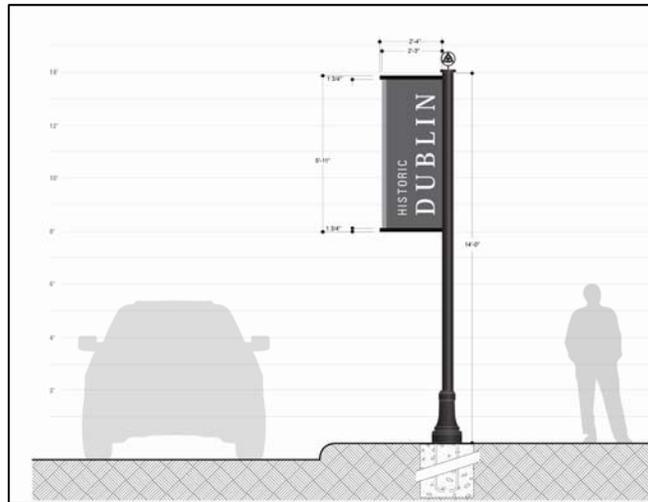


Figure 5: Proposed Historic Dublin ID

As a replacement to the obelisks, Kolar has provided a sign design that highlights the entry into Historic Dublin using a version of the standard wayfinding sign. The proposed sign will only have the text “Historic Dublin” and will have a unique finial at the top of the supporting post that is consistent for all wayfinding signs in Historic Dublin (Figure 5). These would be placed in the approximate locations as the current obelisks. Some slight shifting of location may be needed due to site locations and road improvements being made.

Historic Dublin Wayfinding

The next sign type will be used only within the boundaries of Historic Dublin. This sign design is the same as those used for all wayfinding, with the exception of a small finial post cap. It will include the “Dublin” identification at the top of the sign, with the appropriate wayfinding destinations. Each panel of the destinations can be changed out to other messages as needed. The supporting pole is the same as is being used for the current lighting posts with the decorative base. (See Attachment 1.)

Standard Wayfinding

The standard wayfinding sign will be used throughout the Bridge Street District, and ultimately, throughout designated areas of the city. As with the other wayfinding signs, each will have the “Dublin” identifier at the top with the appropriate destinations on the interchangeable panel below. The supporting post is a standard pole. Note that the top does not have the distinctive finial that is only used in Historic Dublin. (See Attachment 1.)

Wayfinding/Traffic Control Signs

Another category of wayfinding signs takes place at the SR 161/Riverside Drive roundabout where an overhead sign combines the traffic control function of organizing traffic into appropriate lanes with wayfinding to designated locations. This is an ODOT standard-style sign that will be used to direct drivers into the lanes necessary to find their desired roadway, with an additional wayfinding sign attached on the side of the support post that will direct drivers to major destinations (the Columbus Zoo, Historic Dublin, and Bridge Park are currently identified). (Figure 6)

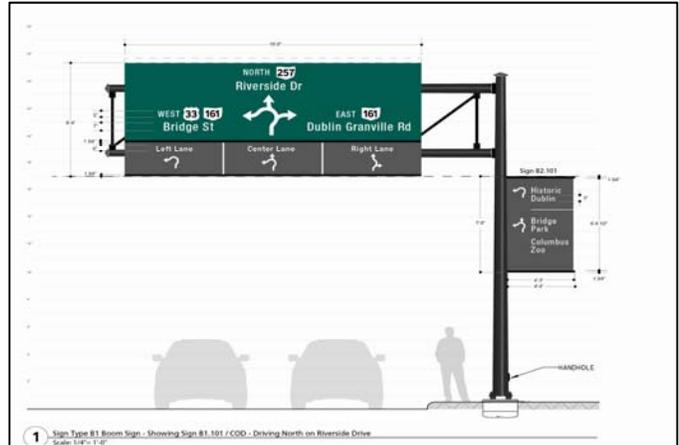


Figure 6: Overhead Sign Design Example

There are four overhead signs anticipated, one on each leg of the roundabout. These signs are placed at the decision making points so that drivers can choose the appropriate lane to reach their destination. They will be illuminated with specially designed lights that are incorporated into the sign design. The overhead signs were designed to maximize clarity for drivers and combine the wayfinding element. Lack of space for additional signs for wayfinding on the approaches to the roundabout was the primary reason for the combination signs. The overhead traffic control signs are necessary as providing this information on a ground mounted sign to the driver's right would require a sign about 20-feet wide. Figures 7 and 8 show the general location in relationship to the roundabout and the design of the sign.



Figure 7: Locations of Overhead Signs



Figure 8: Overhead Sign Location on Approach

Next Steps

Wayfinding Sign Policy

Staff, with Kolar's assistance, will be drafting a proposed sign policy that will provide the guidance necessary to evaluate what destinations should be permitted within the City's wayfinding system. Generally, this policy will be related to three principal concepts:

1. Wayfinding priorities will concentrate on Historical, Ecological, Cultural, Social, and Civic Institutions based on the traffic generated by those locations/features/activities.
2. Locations of signs and the distance from the wayfinding destinations will determine the frequency of the wayfinding messages (i.e. the greater the wayfinding need, the farther out the messaging will start).
3. The purpose of wayfinding will be to connect users from highways to major access routes, and then to secondary roads as necessary to reach the intended destination.

An important purpose of developing a policy is to have proper guidance when faced with requests from individuals, groups, agencies, and others to be part of the wayfinding system.

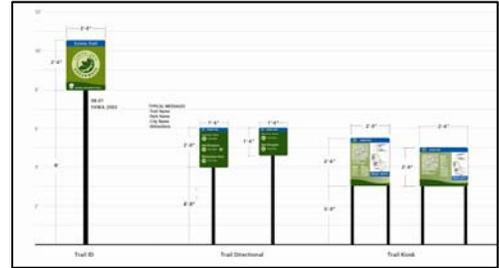
Gateways

Another wayfinding feature is the establishment of gateway locations into the city and a suitable identification feature at those locations. A variety of design selections and proposed locations will be presented for Council's consideration.



Secondary Wayfinding

Kolar is also proposing a system of signs related to the City's multi-use pathways, trails and other similar facilities. These will be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Department for future consideration.



Implementation

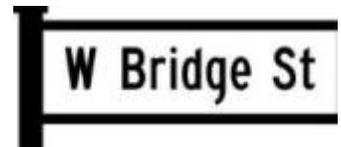
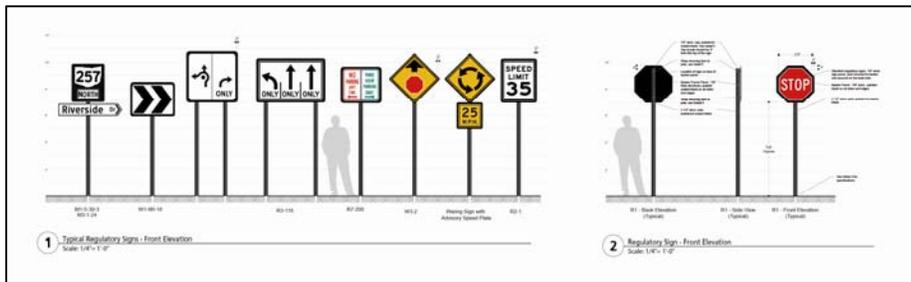
This effort is intended to be implemented in phases; some in planned phases and others as roadway or other related improvements are made. The first phase will be concentrated in Historic Dublin, the area involved in the SR 161/Riverside Drive improvements, and Bridge Park, including areas that lead to these attractions. More details and costs will be presented with the CIP process.

Recommendation

Staff recommends Council consideration of the following proposed actions.

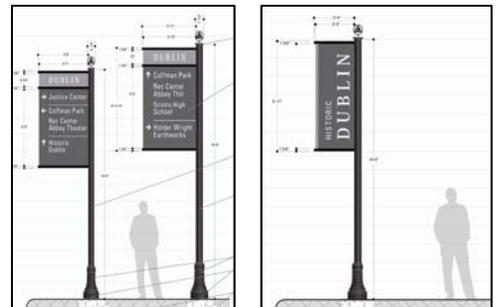
1. Approval of Bridge Street District street name signs and traffic control signs.

The proposed signs are consistent with Federal requirements for street signs and allow a unique look for streets within the Bridge Street District.



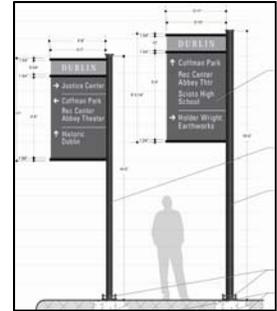
2. Approval of the Historic Dublin wayfinding and entry sign designs.

The proposed entry sign presents a unique opportunity to more clearly mark the entry into Historic Dublin, as a replacement for the current obelisks. The wayfinding signs are consistent with the general wayfinding format yet provide a distinctive identifier for Historic Dublin through the use of a finial design at the top.



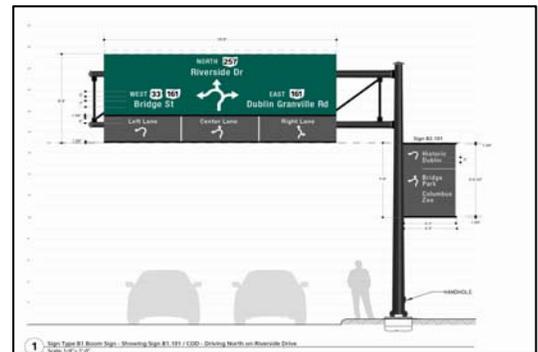
3. Approval of the standard wayfinding sign design.

The proposed standard wayfinding sign is intended for use throughout the city, outside of Historic Dublin. Sign colors and design are consistent with the City's branding identity and provide a high quality sign to identify key destinations.



4. Approval of the wayfinding sign mounted with the overhead traffic control signs.

The ODOT standard-style sign will be used to as the required lane assignment sign to direct drivers into the lanes necessary to find their desired roadway entering the four legs of the SR 161/Riverside Drive roundabout. The overhead signs were designed to maximize clarity for drivers and combine the wayfinding element. Lack of space for additional signs for wayfinding on the approaches to the roundabout was the primary reason for the combination signs.



ATTACHMENT 1

