

The Theatre on Pine Isn't There Anymore: Creating Better Wayfinding Solutions in DTLB

When you travel to a new city, how do you find your way around? When you're in your city but within an area you don't know, how do you find your way around? Do you look for signage, a maybe a directory or a map?

These questions create the main conceptual drive behind the design of wayfinding. While we use wayfinding every day of our lives, most of us are unaware of how important it really is until we successfully got from Point A to Point B by relying solely on the infrastructure that was put in place to guide us—and if got there without feeling frustrated, confused, or getting lost, then the way that place told you how to get around was well-designed.

While good wayfinding is cohesive and clear, unfortunately, much of Long Beach is plagued with multiple aesthetics, aging signage, different directions, and conflicting or out-of-date information with its plethora of signs—and that's precisely why the City of Long Beach is looking to redevelop its signage, starting right here in DTLB.

Partnering with the Downtown Long Beach Associates (DLBA) to fund the design of the signage, the project includes pedestrian directional signs, a wayfinding map, directory kiosks, historical and storytelling signage, neighborhood identities for banners, and pavement markings.

The DLBA envisions a wayfinding system that is designed, first and foremost, as an image that not only reflects DTLB properly but guides people to where they want to go, eases traffic,

assists with public transit, provides history, and is easy to read. The goals of a Downtown Pedestrian Wayfinding condensed ultimately come down to:

- To create a consistent signage and wayfinding system across a range of sign and publication mediums, including potentially mobile and web-based technologies.
- To create a signage and wayfinding system that focuses on directing pedestrians to Downtown neighborhoods, landmarks, facilities, and services, and major destinations.
- To establish signage and wayfinding links to city bicycle and pedestrian paths.
- To improve visitor information on events in the Downtown.
- To promote Downtown Long Beach's identity as a premier business, cultural, arts, entertainment, dining, and shopping destination.

In June 2016, a kick-off meeting with the consultant was held, including robust outreach that involved (and will continue to involve) numerous stakeholder outreach meetings, including a future survey that will be widely distributed for public feedback.

The project, currently on schedule, is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2017.