FLATS FORWARD WAYFINDING PROGRAM
PROJECT FRAMEWORK
INTRODUCTION

The Flats is a unique site where the innovation and history of the city meet the natural environment of the river and lake. Entertainment, dining, recreation and exploration are all part of its distinctive atmosphere. As an extension of your brand, your signage program should reflect those same characteristics. The signage program is one of the first physical interactions with your site and will make an impression—either positive or negative—to visitors and guests.

ISSUES WITH CURRENT SIGNAGE

• Lack of signage at entries and connecting Banks
• Sign clutter at decision points
• Existing signage is too small
• Inconsistent nomenclature
• Existing signage is generic & uninviting
• Dated and worn
• Obscured sight lines
• Inconsistent designs and styles
• Inconsistent and confusing parking ID signs
GOALS

PROJECT GOALS

- Develop an authentic and meaningful sign system to enhance the visitor experience and exceed their expectations.

- Increase positive perception of The Flats with a consistent, recognizable and inviting sign family that creates a safe and welcoming atmosphere.

- Establish clear and concise messaging that utilizes consistent nomenclature, while aligning with the website, maps and other communication pieces.

- Define separate pathways of ingress and egress to reduce traffic congestion.

- Produce easy-to-maintain and expandable signage to allow necessary changes and updates due to the ongoing developments.

- Highlight sense of place through consistent and exciting signage.
Which of these descriptive words most reflects The Flats? Which words are least appropriate in describing the character and style of The Flats?

**Most Appropriate**
- Gritty
- Colorful
- Eclectic

**Least Appropriate**
- Refined
- Subtle
- Clean

**Gritty**
- Colorful
- Eclectic

**Colorful**
- Gritty
- Eclectic

**Eclectic**
- Gritty
- Colorful
DISCOVERY RESULTS

DISCOVERY SESSION: PERSONAS

MARITIME TRAVELERS
- BOATERS

TOURISTS
- DINERS / FAMILIES / CONCERT GO-ERS

REC ENTHUSIASTS
- ROWERS / BIKERS

BUSINESS TRAFFIC
- DELIVERY TRUCK DRIVERS / HOSPITALITY & INDUSTRIAL WORKERS
DISCOVERY RESULTS

DISCOVERY SESSION: JOURNEY MAPPING
The Flats district can be split into naturally distinct areas, separated by the river and bridges. These distinct areas can be utilized to simplify wayfinding and communication.
An effective wayfinding program should provide only the most relevant information at relevant times. Creating a nomenclature hierarchy that starts with only basic information (The Flats, East Bank, West Bank, etc.) and becomes more specific as the visitor approaches their destination allows the wayfinding program to be concise, organized and more easily comprehended.

Note: Private businesses, (corporate offices, restaurants, hospitality, etc.) are not typically placed on community wayfinding signs.

Bold - Major destinations determined during Discovery exercises

Which bank/area?

East Bank
Flats East Bank
Settlers Landing/RTA
Water Taxi

Columbus Peninsula
Canal Basin Park (Future)
Rivergate Park
Foundry (Future)

West Bank
Nautica Complex
Sugar Warehouse?
Jacobs Pavilion
Nautica Queen
Windows on the River
Improv
Music Box
Water Taxi
Superior Viaduct
Stonebridge

Scranton Peninsula
Towpath Trail
Centennial Link Trail

Where am I going?

Where do I park?

P
Identify with letter or number
Owner/Operator & Rates

What else can I do?

Bridges
Center St. Bridge
Columbus Rd. Bridge
Carter Rd. Bridge

Others

Egress
Whiskey Island
Downtown
Warehouse District
Ohio City
North Coast Harbor
Public Square
From the South:
via 77: Ontario St + W Huron Rd
via Broadway Ave: E 9th Ext and Canal Rd
via 77: Ontario St + W Huron Rd

From the East:
via Superior Ave: W 10th + Old River Rd
via W 9th: Main Ave + Old River Rd
via 90 W: W 3rd St, Lakeside Ave + Main Ave

From the West:
via Lorain Ave + Columbus Rd
via Superior Ave
via 90E: W25th St + Columbus Rd
From the South:
via 77: Ontario St + W Huron Rd, Superior Ave + Winslow Ave
via Broadway Ave: Canal Rd, Center St + Winslow Ave
*NA (Directed to Google Maps)

From the East:
via 2W: 28th St Ext, Washington Ave + Winslow Ave
via W Superior Ave: W 25th St + Winslow Ave
*NA (Directed to Google Maps)

From the West:
via Fulton Rd + W 28th: Washington Ave + W 25th St, Washington Ave + Winslow Ave
via Fulton Rd + W 25th St: Franklin Blvd, W 25th St + Winslow Ave
*NA (Directed to Google Maps)
TRAVEL PATH—RESEARCHED // RIVERGATE PARK & MERWIN’S WHARF

SITE LEGEND

TRAVEL PATHS:
- Google Maps
- Secondary Google Maps
- Destination Website

From the South:
via 77: Ontario St + Carnegie Ave, Columbus Rd + Merwin Ave
via Broadway Ave: Canal Rd, Columbus Rd + Merwin Ave
*Not listed

From the East:
via Superior Ave: Columbus Rd + Merwin Ave
via St. Clair: Columbus Rd + Merwin Ave
via W 2: Ext W 25th St, W 28th St + Church Ave, W 25th St + Franklin Ave, Columbus Ave + Merwin Ave

From the West:
via Lorain: W 24th + Abbey Ave, Columbus Rd + Merwin Ave
via Fulton Rd + W 25th St: Franklin Blvd, W 25th St + Winslow Ave
via 90: Ext W 25th St, Columbus Ave + Merwin Ave
The perceived entry point into a district, community or neighborhood is different from the jurisdictional entry point (the actual defined boundary). It is the moment—a feeling—when the visitor recognizes they have arrived.

**PRIMARY GATEWAYS**
With The Flats’ elevation being below the level of surrounding districts, the natural perceived points of entry are when you descend into The Flats, see the river and are part of the industrial fabric of the area.

**SECONDARY GATEWAYS**
Secondary points of arrival are internal, crossing over from one area/bank to another.
TRAVEL PATH—RECOMMENDED // FROM THE SOUTH VIA COLUMBUS RD.
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Secondary points of arrival are internal, crossing over from one area/bank to another.
TRAVEL PATH—RECOMMENDED // FROM THE WEST VIA W 25TH ST. (SHOREWAY & OHIO CITY)
TRAVEL PATH—RECOMMENDED // FROM THE WEST VIA W 25TH ST. (SHOREWAY & OHIO CITY)

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TRAVEL PATH—RECOMMENDED // FROM THE EAST VIA CLEVELAND MEMORIAL SHOREWAY

SITE LEGEND

TRAVEL PATH:
Approach

FLATS FORWARD WAYFINDING PROGRAM   PROJECT FRAMEWORK
PAGE 20
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With The Flats’ elevation being below the level of surrounding districts, the natural perceived points of entry are when you descend into The Flats, see the river and are part of the industrial fabric of the area.

**SECONDARY GATEWAYS**
Secondary points of arrival are internal, crossing over from one area/bank to another.
Where possible, direct exiting traffic to alternate roads from approaching traffic to alleviate congestion.
To ensure that your visitors leave the best possible experience at your destination, you want to offer clarity and reduce confusion even before they arrive. While you can't control every aspect of their journey, you can coordinate with Department of Transportation and surrounding communities to make sure that your destination is represented in their wayfinding experiences.

An visitors approach your destination, you want to provide them with trailblazers that act as confidence markers, confirming that they are headed in the right direction. Not only does this orient and direct them, it also assists in creating a frustration-free experience of your destination.

In the process of arriving at your destination there are two types of entry points: jurisdictional boundaries and points of interest. By offering appropriate and succinct information at decision points, you can decrease the potential for visitors to get lost which also keeps them happy, calm and in a good mood to experience the rest of their destination. Directional signage that welcomes your visitors, introduces your brand, complements the environment, sets the tone for the rest of their interaction with your place.

Directional signage is an extremely important tool that clarifies the best ways to navigate through your destination. By offering appropriate and succinct information at decision points, you can decrease the potential for visitors to get lost which also keeps them happy, calm and in a good mood to experience the rest of their destination. Directional signage needed to be built at a scale that is legible and easy to use when traveling at higher speeds in a vehicle.

Realistically, visitors in vehicles will need to find parking before they actually arrive to the core of your destination. By offering consistent and visible parking identification signage, visitors can comprehend a larger and more specific range of information, such as descriptions and maps. Pedestrian signage not only directs and assures visitors that they are heading in the right way, it can also be an opportunity to suggest and encourage traffic to other destinations in your place.

By now, visitors have parked their cars and are in need of directional and informational signage while on foot. At the much slower speed of walking, visitors can comprehend a larger and more specific range of information, such as descriptions and maps. Pedestrian signage need to be built at a scale that is legible and easy to use when traveling at higher speeds on a vehicle.

They made it! Installing signage to identify specific landmarks, events, and points of interest confirms your visitors arrival and continues to set the tone for the rest of their experience. Banners and other branded visuals can also help orient your visitors and communicate the level of care and attention that you have invested into your destination.

Helping visitors depart is just as important as helping them arrive—their experience continues as they leave. This step can decide a positive or negative impression, ultimately affecting the likelihood of their return. Pedestrian directional and orientation signage continues to instruct visitors as they search for the next destination, explore other areas of your destination or return to their car.

Because visitors will continue to approach intersections and areas that streamline directional signage to simplify their destination in just as crucial when they leave your place.

To continue a smooth journey away from your destination, visitors should have access to trailblazers and signage for highways and surrounding communities to orient and direct them home.

Specific Information

General Information

ODOT & outside community wayfinding
Trailblazers at or near jurisdictional borders
Gateway signs at perceived entry points
Directional signs
Parking ID signs
Directional & orientation signs
ID signs
Parking ID signs
Directional signs
Trailblazers at or near jurisdictional borders

APPROACH
APPROACH
ARRIVAL
DECISION
ARRIVAL
DECISION
ARRIVAL
DECISION
DEPARTURE
State routes, highways and neighboring communities/districts utilize existing signage programs. Coordination with these surrounding areas is necessary to create a consistent wayfinding experience.

**APPROACH >>**

**ODOT/COMMUNITY WAYFINDING**

A trailblazer is a sign featuring a singular direction to one destination. Trailblazer signage is usually installed on the primary roadway(s) that provide the most direct route and in close proximity to the destination.

**GATEWAY ELEMENTS**

Gateway signs announce arrival when entering into an area, such as districts and neighborhoods. They are often placed at points where one psychologically feels as if they have arrived rather than jurisdictional boundaries.

**NOMENCLATURE – SIGN CONTENT**

Direct to The Flats

The Flats/Flats
The Flats/Flats-West Bank
The Flats/Flats-East Bank
The Flats/Flats-Columbus Peninsula

Direct to The Flats

The Flats/Flats
The Flats/Flats-West Bank
The Flats/Flats-East Bank
The Flats/Flats-Columbus Peninsula

Welcome to The Flats

The Flats/Flats
The Flats/Flats-West Bank
The Flats/Flats-East Bank
The Flats/Flats-Columbus Peninsula

The Flats may require two versions of Gateway Elements—a primary version at points entering from outside communities and a secondary internal version when crossing from one bank/area of The Flats to another. These signs may also incorporate simple directional messages.
PRIMARY VEHICULAR DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

A sign intended to provide directional information. Typically it conveys more than one direction and information is presented sequentially starting with left-turn, right-turn then straight-ahead. There can be multiple levels of directional signs that progress from general to specific messages.

Direct to Major Destinations

NOMENCLATURE - SIGN CONTENT

GENERAL INFORMATION: City Park, Downtown, Shops & Dining, Cultural District, Museums

SPECIFIC INFORMATION:

The Flats East Bank
The Flats West Bank
Columbus Peninsula
Scranton Peninsula

Nautica Complex
Sugar Warehouse
(Improv/Music Box/Shooters)

Aquarium
Jacobs Pavilion
Nautica Queen
Windows on the River
Water Taxi
Superior Viaduct

Stonebridge
Rivergate Park
Foundry
Canal Basin Park
Settlers Landing/RTA

Bold - Major destinations determined during Discovery exercises
ARRIVAL >>

PARKING IDENTIFICATION SIGNS
A sign intended to identify and direct vehicular traffic to public parking areas.

IDENTIFICATION SIGNS
A sign intended to provide identification for a specific landmark, city asset or point of interest.

BRANDED STREET SIGNS
A branded element included with the street signs that ties the signs in with the rest of the wayfinding system. The branding element can also be used to identify districts or areas within a city or neighborhood.

BANNERS
A sign made of fabric, plastic or other materials which has no enclosing framework. These may be temporary or permanent in intent and are used to provide announcements to entries or boundary identification.

Identifies Public Parking
PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION
Public Parking (Lot Designations TBD)
Owner/Operator
Hours/Rates

Identifies Landmark
PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION
Center St. Bridge
Columbus Rd. Bridge
Carter Rd. Bridge
Nautica Complex
Sugar Warehouse?
Settlers Landing

Boundary/Street Identification
PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION
Street Name
(Branded Element TBD)

Announce Entry/Boundary Identification
PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION
The Flats
(could also be used to identify specific areas/districts)
Sign Type Hierarchy // Pedestrian/Bike Signage

**INFORMATION >>**

**OrientatioN Kiosks**
A directional sign including a map intended to provide pedestrians with orientation information between the sign location and a larger area.

**Decision >>**

**Pedestrian/Bike Multidirectional Signs**
A smaller-scale sign intended to provide directional information to specific places at a pedestrian level.

**Experience >>**

**Interpretive**
A storytelling element that conveys the history of a district, neighborhood, building or organization.

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**Recommendation:** Pedestrian signage allows for a comprehensive wayfinding experience.

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**By Destination Cleveland**

Direct to Points of Interest, Surrounding Districts, etc.

**Nomencature - Sign Content**

**General Information**

- The Flats East Bank
- The Flats West Bank
- Columbus Peninsula
- Scranton Peninsula

- Nautica Complex
  - Sugar Warehouse (Improv/Music Box/Shooters)

- Aquarium
- Jacobs Pavilion
- Nautica Queen
- Windows on the River
- Water Taxi
- Superior Viaduct

**Bold** - Major destinations determined during Discovery exercises.

- Stonebridge
- Rivergate Park
- Foundry
- Canal Basin Park
- Settlers Landing/RTA

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**Nomencature - Sign Content**

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

- Aquarium
- Jacobs Pavilion
- Nautica Queen
- Windows on the River
- Water Taxi
- Superior Viaduct

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*(Trailblazers will require coordination with other communities and organizations.)*

**(Gateways may incorporate simple directional messages.)*
**GENERAL GUIDELINES**

A) Background and graphics to be retro-reflective using high-intensity prismatic vinyl (graphics may be printed on diamond grade reflective sheeting)

AA) Message Quantity: < 35 MPH
Max. four (4) destinations

B) Font size: < 35 MPH
4" Copy Height

C) Arrow Style: Sans Serif
"Placed with directive"

D) Break-away pole connection/foundation as approved by DOT/FHWA

**ANATOMY OF A COMMUNITY WAYFINDING SIGN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message #1 (up to 2 lines)</th>
<th>Message #2</th>
<th>Message #3 (up to 2 lines)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Message #2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Message #2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DESIGN CRITERIA & WAYFINDING STRATEGY**

> **USER FRIENDLY** | Text, graphics and mapping is legible and uncomplicated.
  - Directional messages will be limited to no more than 4-5 messages.
  - The users’ initial destination for all vehicular wayfinding is Parking (closest to their destination). Upon entry into The Flats, signs will direct towards public parking.

> **AESTHETICS** | Harmonious in all respects, enduring design and appropriate scale.

> **MAINTAINABLE** | Cleanable, repairable surfaces, information easily changed or added, low maintenance and durable. Information hierarchy allows for an organized and manageable wayfinding program.

> **VANDAL RESISTANT** | No exposed access points, tamper proof screws and bolts, strong structures that are securely installed.

> **ORIENTATION** | Signs oriented for the greatest visibility for users.
  - Landscaping and other structures should enhance and not interfere with the visibility of the sign.
  - Directional signs will be implemented at key decision points and announce only major visitor-based destinations in the Flats. Private businesses, (corporate offices, restaurants, hospitality, etc.) are not typically placed on community wayfinding signs.

> **CONSISTENCY** | Sign/element design are consistent throughout the sign system and easily recognized as information hubs throughout the City.
  - Nomenclature should be consistent from wayfinding signs down to actual identification at the destination arrival point. This consistent language should flow down to pedestrian sign systems as well as destination language used by the places and institutions themselves.
  - Comprehensive parking lot naming sets up a recognizable system, limits message lengths, and reinforces a unified Flats Parking experience.

> **SYSTEM** | This program must consider the use of all wayfinding tools and not simply signage.
  - Sign messages should be communicated in a hierarchial progression from general to specific as visitors move from outside The Flats, to The Flats and within.
  - Effective wayfinding provides the most relevant information at the proper and relevant time.
VEHICULAR SIGNAGE—CRITICAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE SYMBOL LEGEND</th>
<th>QTY</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trailblazer (External/Secondary)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$1,000 (unit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$9,000 (total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trailblazer</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>$1,500 (unit)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$18,000 (total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Gateway</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Secondary Gateway</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Directional</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$73,500 (total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parking Identification</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$3,200 (unit)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$19,200 (total)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
<td><strong>$202,200</strong></td>
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VEHICULAR SIGNAGE—SUPPORTIVE

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<th>SITE SYMBOL LEGEND</th>
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<th>BUDGET</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landmark/ Destination Identification (Large)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NON-ILLUM: $12,000 (unit)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>$72,000 (total)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ILLUM: $60,000 (unit)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>$360,000 (total)</td>
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<td>Landmark/ Destination Identification (Small)</td>
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<td>$4,000 (unit)</td>
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<td>$24,000 (total)</td>
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<td>Branded Street Signs</td>
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<td>$500 (unit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banners</td>
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<td>$750 (unit)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,500 (unit)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td><strong>$96,000–$384,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** $302,640–$779,040

**DESIGN DEVELOPMENT** $35,000–$45,000
**IMPLEMENTATION MANAGEMENT** $15,000–$18,000
**FABRICATION/INSTALLATION** $202,200–$586,200
**20% CONTINGENCY** $50,440–$129,840

**GENERAL NOTES**
1. Budget numbers are based on non-illuminated structures, unless otherwise noted.
2. Budget numbers provided for the large landmark identification letters is average per set of letters. Final price will depend on the number, size and location of letters.
3. Budget numbers do not include running of electrical to sign locations.
1. Implement a pedestrian/bike signage system that appropriately reflects The Flats image and effectively directs visitors throughout and between each bank/area.

2. Develop river signage as an extension of The Flats sign program to help direct boaters.

3. Include historic/interpretive story-telling signage to improve the overall visitor experience and encourage pedestrian travel.

4. Improve roads and travel path experience to make The Flats feel more inviting, comfortable and safe.

5. Clarify The Flats brand cohesively to better communicate various assets in order to attract visitors, new business and partnerships while also strengthening existing relationships.

The Destination Cleveland wayfinding program provides effective macro-level information directing to other districts and primary destinations. A pedestrian signage program unique to The Flats, supplemental to the DCA signage program, will help direct on a micro-level and create a feeling of authenticity and cohesiveness with the vehicular program.
RECOMMENDATIONS // BEYOND VEHICULAR SIGNAGE

1. Implement a pedestrian/bike signage system that appropriately reflects The Flats image and effectively directs visitors throughout and between each bank/area.

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1. Implement a *pedestrian/bike* signage system that appropriately reflects The Flats *image* and effectively *directs* visitors throughout and between each bank/area.

2. Develop *river* signage as an extension of The Flats sign program to help *direct* boaters.

3. Include *historic/interpretive* story-telling signage to improve the overall visitor experience and encourage pedestrian travel.

4. Improve *roads* and travel path experience to make The Flats feel more *inviting, comfortable* and *safe*.

5. Clarify The Flats brand *cohesively* to better communicate various *assets* in order to attract visitors, new business and partnerships while also strengthening existing relationships.
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### Recommendations // Beyond Vehicular Signage

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4. Improve roads and travel-path experience to make The Flats feel more *inviting, comfortable* and *safe*.

5. Clarify The Flats brand *cohesively* to better communicate various *assets* in order to attract visitors, new business and partnerships while also strengthening existing relationships.
RECOMMENDATIONS // BEYOND VEHICULAR SIGNAGE

District Brand – Articulate what makes The Flats experience so distinct
The Flats as a district does not currently have a visual or cohesively articulated brand. We recommend that Flats Forward remain the steward/organizational brand and that you develop a district brand that includes a Positioning Strategy to aid in developing a clear direction for marketing The Flats as a District.

Note:
• While not required, undergoing Brand Development prior to or concurrent with sign program design will allow the brand image to be integrated into the sign program.

District Website – Set appropriate expectations about the experience
The Flats as a district does not currently have an visitor focused website. Destination Cleveland’s website provides an overview of the district and a link to Flats East Bank—but not a link to a comprehensive website that acts as a hub for programming, events, news, etc. We recommend an experience focused website that helps visitors plan a day in The Flats. This site may include Flats-oriented activities and maps, key messages, press, announcements, event information, stories and video, as well as information on district businesses, residential developments and links to stakeholder websites. Consider a mobile design for visitors on the go.

District Marketing Plan – Set a clear and easily managed plan for telling your story
With a Brand established and a website hub, The Flats will have a foundation for distributing information to attract like-minded audiences to the unique experiences provided in the district. An annual marketing plan will guide the organization and stakeholders through focused efforts that showcase the district and drive visitation and attendance to events, programs and dining, retail, entertainment and recreation venues that call The Flats home. Marketing Plans may include PR Strategy, Social Media Strategy, Content Strategy, Media distribution avenues, etc., keeping the resources—both in human and financial—in consideration so that the effort can be consistently maintained over time.