Wayfinding refers to information systems that guide people through a physical environment and enhance their understanding and experience of the space.

---SEGD
**Designer Roles & Process**

The MBTA signage process involves both MBTA Design and Design Consultants, and requires careful coordination in order to successfully implement the signage system at every station.

**MBTA Design**

The MBTA is responsible for:

1. Layout of signage based on pathway diagrams.
2. Design of sign graphics using custom software.
3. Creation of full scale sign files used for fabrication.

The MBTA provides all sign plans, sign schedules and sign elevations to the Design Consultant for inclusion into the construction documents.

**Design Consultant**

The Design Consultant is responsible for:

1. Evaluation of existing sign frames (at existing stations).
2. Selection and engineering of sign frames and details.
3. Coordination and integration of signage with station architecture.

The Design Consultant is also responsible for incorporating all signage content into the construction documents.

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### Timeline and Process

- **30%:**
  - 3D Modeling (Optional)
  - Create/assess visualizations
  - Revise frame elevations

- **60%, 90%:**
  - Review signage package
  - Submit scaled sign elevations
  - Review field measurements

- **100%:**
  - Submit fabrication files
  - Review shop drawings/samples/mock-ups
  - Submit CDs/specs
  - Repeat steps 5 - 10 as needed
  - Incorporate all signage content

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### Elements

- **Coordination**
- **Mounting**
- **3D Modeling (Optional)**
- **Construction Documents**
- **Coordination / Refinement**
- **Construction Phase**
MBTA Signage System Overview

Sign Layouts

Sign Graphics

Full Scale Fabrication Files

Existing Sign Frames

Frames/Details

Coordination
**Supporting a Diverse Community of Riders**

While the majority of MBTA transit stations are accessible, the accessible paths connecting entrances to trains are frequently different than the ambulatory paths. The new wayfinding system is based on a pathway diagram system that identifies every path split and decision point within a station. Accurate signing of accessible, ambulatory and combined paths is determined by each station’s unique set of pathways.

**Station Journey section diagram:** illustrates how the combined path (accessible/ambulatory) splits at vertical circulation points into separate accessible and ambulatory paths, and then rejoins on the next level.
MBTA Signage System Overview

Identity

- Red Line
- Orange Line
- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Silver Line
- Commuter Rail
- Ferry
- Bus

COLOR BANDS

T-LOGO

HELVETICA NEUE MBTA BOLD
Helvetica Neue ADA Bus

MAPS

SYMBOLS

PATHS

icons

ENTERING

EXITING

SYSTEM

LINE - DESTINATION

SCHEDULE NOTES

Custom-kerned fonts create consistent, ADA-compliant text:

HELVETICA NEUE MBTA BOLD
Helvetica Neue ADA Bus

LINE - DESTINATION

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ENTERING

EXITING

System
Line
Busway

Neighborhood
Neighborhood Bus

Entering
Exiting

Ambulatory
Accessible
Sign Layout - 4 Sign Types

A: Overhead-In

B: Overhead-Out

C: Surface-In

D: Surface-Out

Signed decision point: ambulatory & accessible paths split
The foundation of the new signage system is a standardized, code-compliant vocabulary of symbols, fonts, colors and maps, along with the an accurate master database of destinations, modes and terms that may appear on signage.

Clarity is achieved through a comprehensive set of rules for organizing the placement of graphics and content on sign panels. Clarity is the judicious display of wayfinding information, arranged and presented to maximize the customer’s ability to easily scan for information and navigate stations.

The purpose of consistency is to instill trust in the users of the overall MBTA system – this is the sense that each station uses the same methods and conventions of communication. In turn, customers develop confidence that the signage everywhere is reliable, clear and correct.
MBTA Signage System Overview

**Subway**
- multiline stations
- single-line stations

**Commuter Rail**

**Ferry**

**Tactile/Braille**

**Bus**
Signage Types

4 Sign Types

- **entering**
- **overhead**
- **surface**

- **exiting**

Application of the four sign types at a multilane subway station
Signage Types

Tactile/Braille

The Tactile/Braille signage system is comprised of three sign types: Directional, Informational and Room IDs. Directional signs are located at specific ADA-required points within a station, including station entries and platforms.

Custom Software automates the creation of ADA-compliant signs, with all dimensional metrics pre-defined within the software. The mounting location is also highly defined by ADA: signs must be mounted at the correct height in uniform locations, with an 18” square clear space in front of them, so that visually impaired customers may readily locate and make use of them. Without consistent placement relative to paths and architectural elements, Tactile/Braille signs are like finding a needle in a haystack for the customers who need them.
Bus

There are over 8,100 bus stops and 27 busways on the MBTA system. Over the years, there has been inconsistency in the appearance of bus berth and street signage. The new bus signage system creates a unified identity for buses - both on the street and at stations - that integrates visually and functionally with the overall graphic wayfinding program of the new signage system.

Bus street sign design is completely automated by a custom software. Bus signs have many design variables than including mounting, orientation, identity type and sign size. Busway signs are included in construction documents for station signage, while bus street signs are handled completely separately from station signage.