



Municipal Wayfinding Signage Strategy

Prepared for | Town of Petawawa Council
Prepared by | Syntax Strategic

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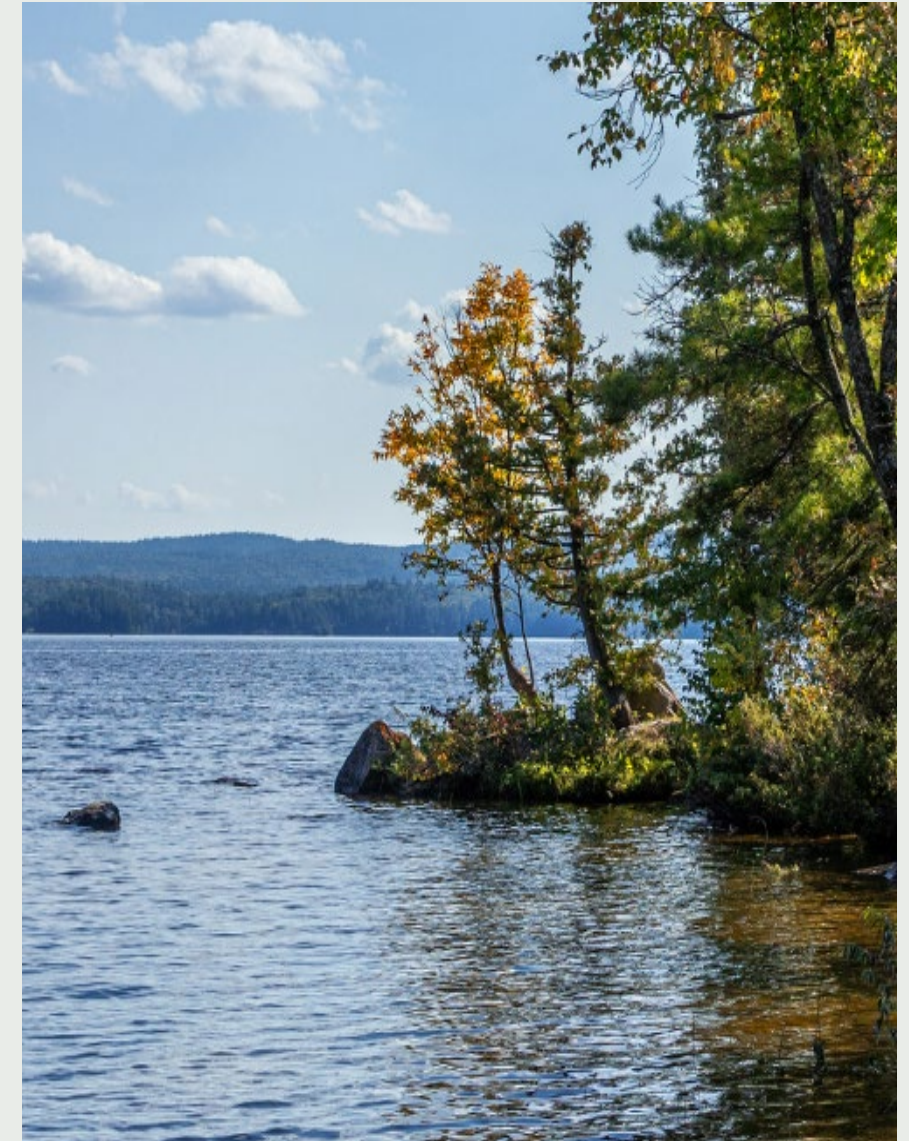
Executive Summary

The Town of Petawawa's Municipal Wayfinding and Signage Strategy is a comprehensive, long-term plan that will transform the way people navigate and experience the community. This strategy combines two important planning efforts, the 2021 Wayfinding Strategy and the Municipal Signage Program, into one unified approach, ensuring that all municipal signage is cohesive, functional, and reflective of the Town's character.

Wayfinding is more than just directional signage. It is a system of visual cues, design consistency, and strategically placed information that collectively help people find their way, discover local amenities, and feel welcomed into the community. In a tourism-oriented municipality like Petawawa, where outdoor adventure and recreation are key attractions, an effective wayfinding program enhances first impressions, supports visitor engagement, and strengthens civic pride.

The proposed strategy is designed to:

- Modernize and unify the Town's signage network.
- Improve navigation for residents, tourists, and businesses.
- Create an attractive, professional public realm.
- Support economic growth through tourism and commerce.
- Implement a fiscally responsible rollout that aligns with the community engagement results to ensure maximum immediate benefit.





Purpose & Strategic Alignment

The town of Petawawa's Strategic Plan and key municipal policy document reinforce the Town's vision of becoming a centre for excellence in recreation, culture, and tourism by making the community more welcoming, navigable, and appealing to both residents and visitors.

The strategy is consistent with several engagement and planning initiatives, including:

- 2021 Community Improvement Plan
- 2024 First Impression Community Exchange
- 2025 Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) Study
- 2025 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

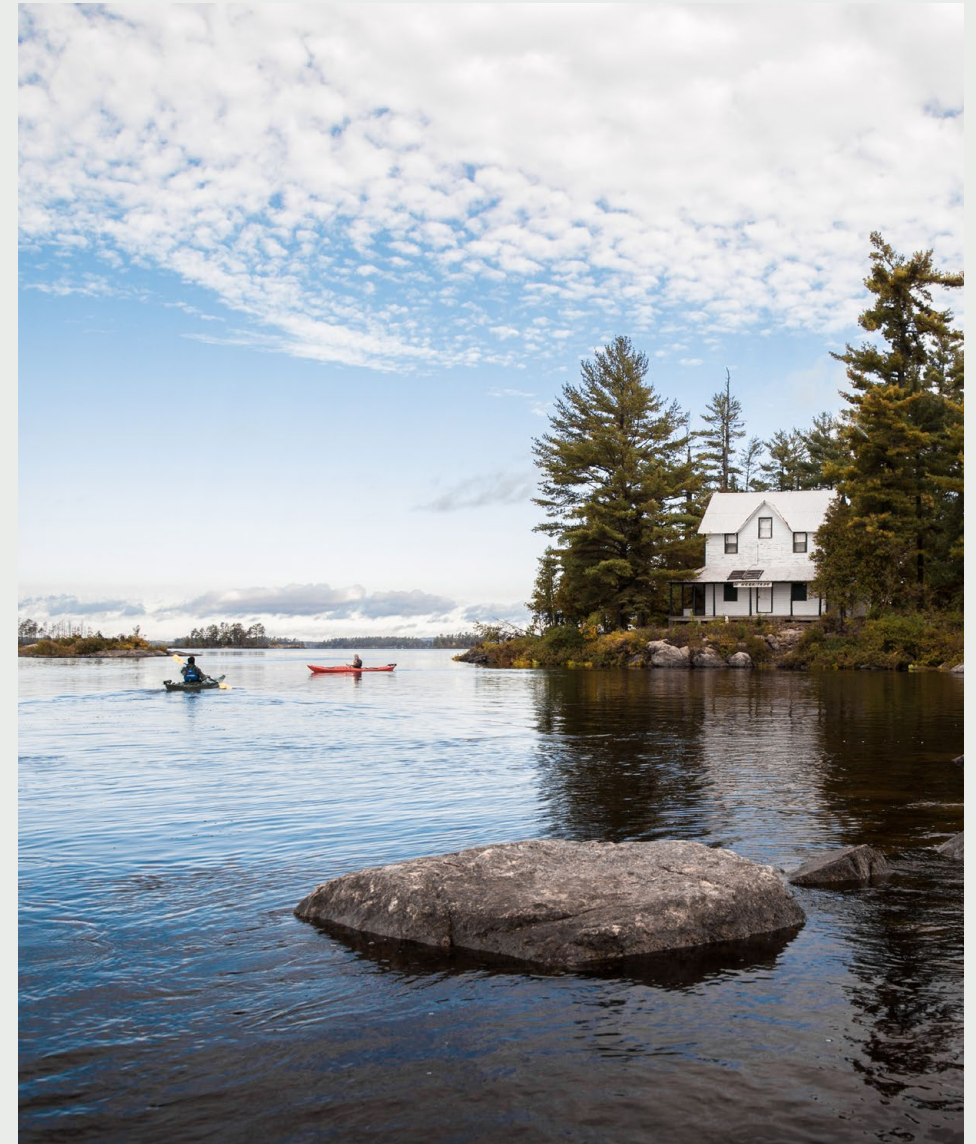
The outcomes of these engagements collectively prioritize town beautification, improvements to enhance experiences at public spaces, and positioning Petawawa as an outdoor adventure destination.

Wayfinding and signage are central to achieving these goals. Consistent, professional, and accessible signage enhances the visitor experience, strengthens community identity, and supports tourism development. It also plays a vital role in public safety and accessibility.

Objectives

The primary objectives of this strategy are to:

- Ensure that the Wayfinding and signage are applied consistently, representing the new brand mark, colours, and visuals per the 2025 Branding exercise.
- Establish a recognizable brand across all municipal signage, reinforcing Petawawa's identity.
- Provide clear, consistent navigation cues to help people move through the community efficiently.
- Highlight key community assets such as parks, waterfronts, cultural facilities, and recreational areas.
- Enhance tourism readiness by ensuring that visitors can easily find their way to attractions and services.
- Replace outdated, inconsistent, or damaged signs with modern, durable, and attractive alternatives.
- Implement an installation plan that balances cost efficiency and operational capacity.
- Create opportunities for businesses to sponsor community signage or enhance visibility through directional signage.
- Incorporate community art in a distinctive way by integrating the tree from the logo and showcasing local artists' works that reflect Petawawa's culture, history, and future, creating a visual narrative of the community's story.





Principles and Design Standards

Petawawa's signage system is guided by six core principles: consistency, legibility, durability, accessibility, hierarchy of information, and sustainability, while reflecting the Town's brand identity and natural surroundings.

A standardized approach to colours, fonts, materials, and layouts ensures signs are recognizable and maximize readability. Accessibility standards will be met through thoughtful text sizing, placement, tactile elements, and visual contrast. Information will be presented in a clear hierarchy, prioritizing primary destinations to reduce clutter and support intuitive navigation. Materials will be durable, weather- and vandal-resistant, and selected with sustainability in mind, including opportunities to reuse existing structures and incorporate environmentally responsible options.

Design choices reinforce Petawawa's identity, drawing from the Town's brand palette and natural environment that reflect its outdoor lifestyle. The Town's logo will be applied consistently, and signs will be positioned for maximum visibility without overwhelming the landscape. Overall, the signage system will be professional, clean, and easy to maintain, supporting both functionality and aesthetics while strengthening Petawawa's sense of place.



Sign Types & Applications

The strategy encompasses a full suite of sign types designed to serve different functions while maintaining a unified look and feel.

Each of these sign types will follow the same visual language, ensuring a cohesive identity across the Town.

Gateway Signs

Gateway signage was strategically developed to preserve the existing stone structures at the three sites.



Node & Tree Art Signs

At intersectional points within the town where existing additional visual displays are present, new signage and promotional materials will be installed that complement the current displays and enhance overall visual cohesion.

Independent trees will be placed for art installations. Trees will then serve as canvases for artist graphics.



Entrance & Destination Area Signs

At key destination areas within the community.



Tourism Signs

These large-format trailhead signs are designed to help visitors orient themselves and plan their journey. The signs feature a detailed map and side panels for key visitor information, routes, amenities, and points of interest, ensuring clarity of use and enhancing the visitor experience.



Directional Signs

Placed along major travel routes to guide people to community amenities.



Trail Marker Signs

Detailed maps, wayfinding markers, and usage guidelines at trail entrances.

Note: Map insert will be for that trail area only.

QR code in bottom corner to link guests to a digital map and website page that may have more about the trail.



Park Signs

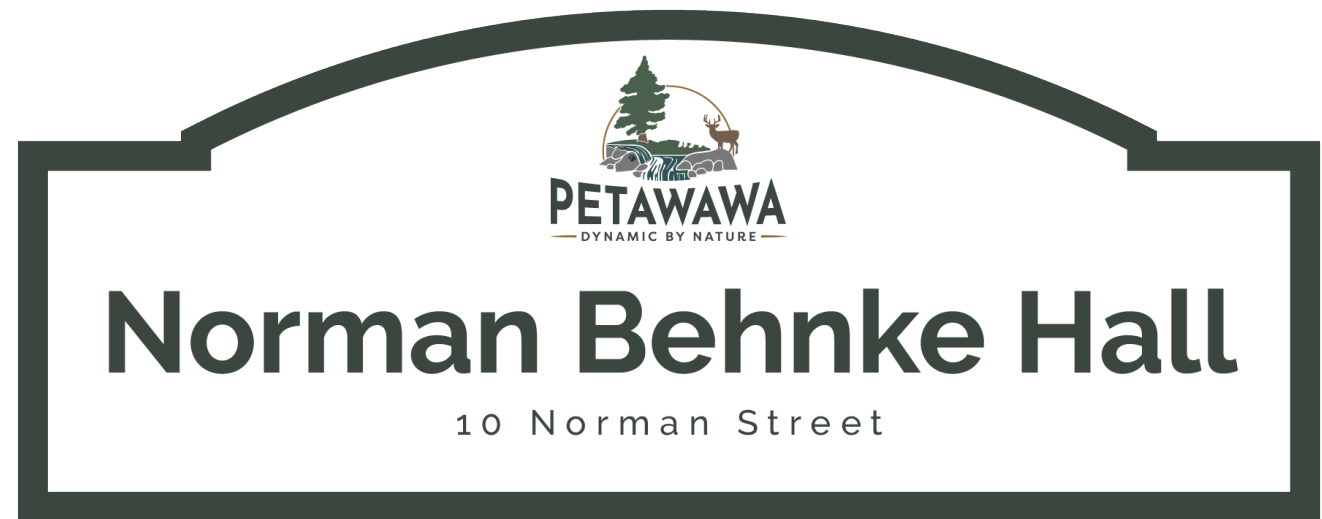
Located at municipal parks to clearly identify location with an address.

Icons can be added at the bottom of the sign to include features specific to each park.



Facility Signs

Facility signs are affixed to buildings, as appropriate and deemed required.



Regulatory Signage

To be placed at amenities where specific regulations need to be detailed.

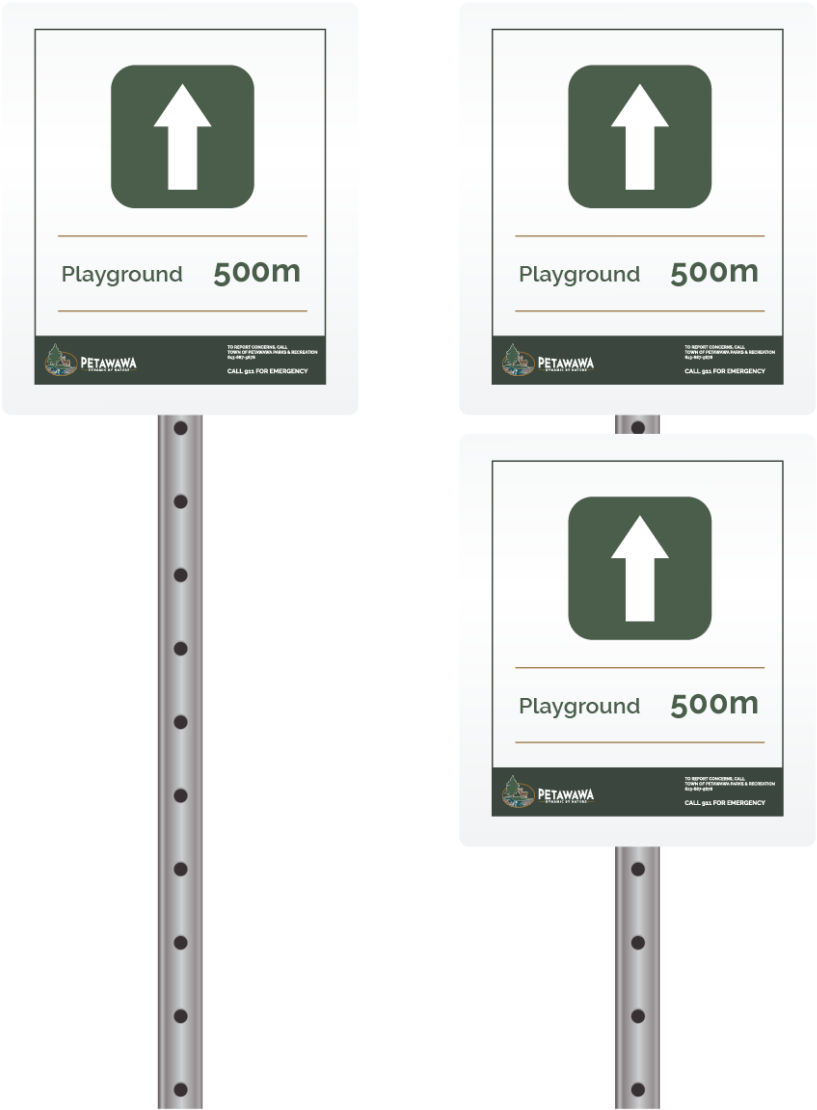
To be installed along trails to provide specific trail regulations.



Trail Regulatory Signs

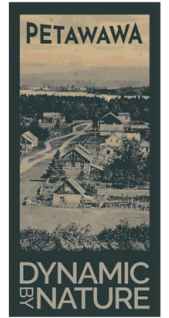
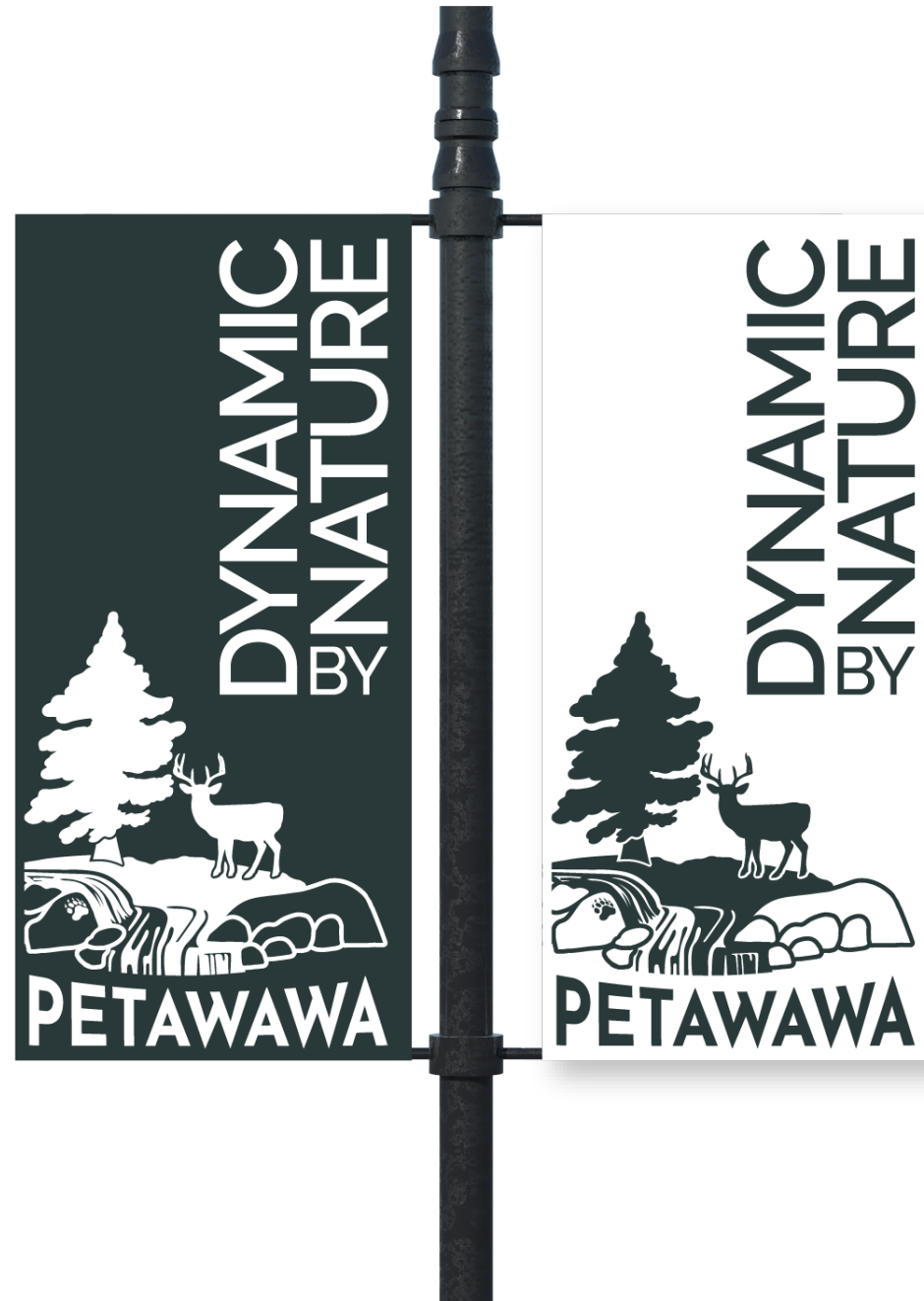
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To be installed along trails to provide specific trail regulations.



Banners

For Hydro poles and lamp posts throughout the town.



OTHER CONCEPTS

Implementation Plan & Phasing

The rollout of the signage program will take place in three phases.

Phase 1

High-Impact Priority Installations will focus on Town entrance signs, major municipal facilities, high-traffic parks, and priority tourism boards. These installations will have the greatest immediate impact on community perception.

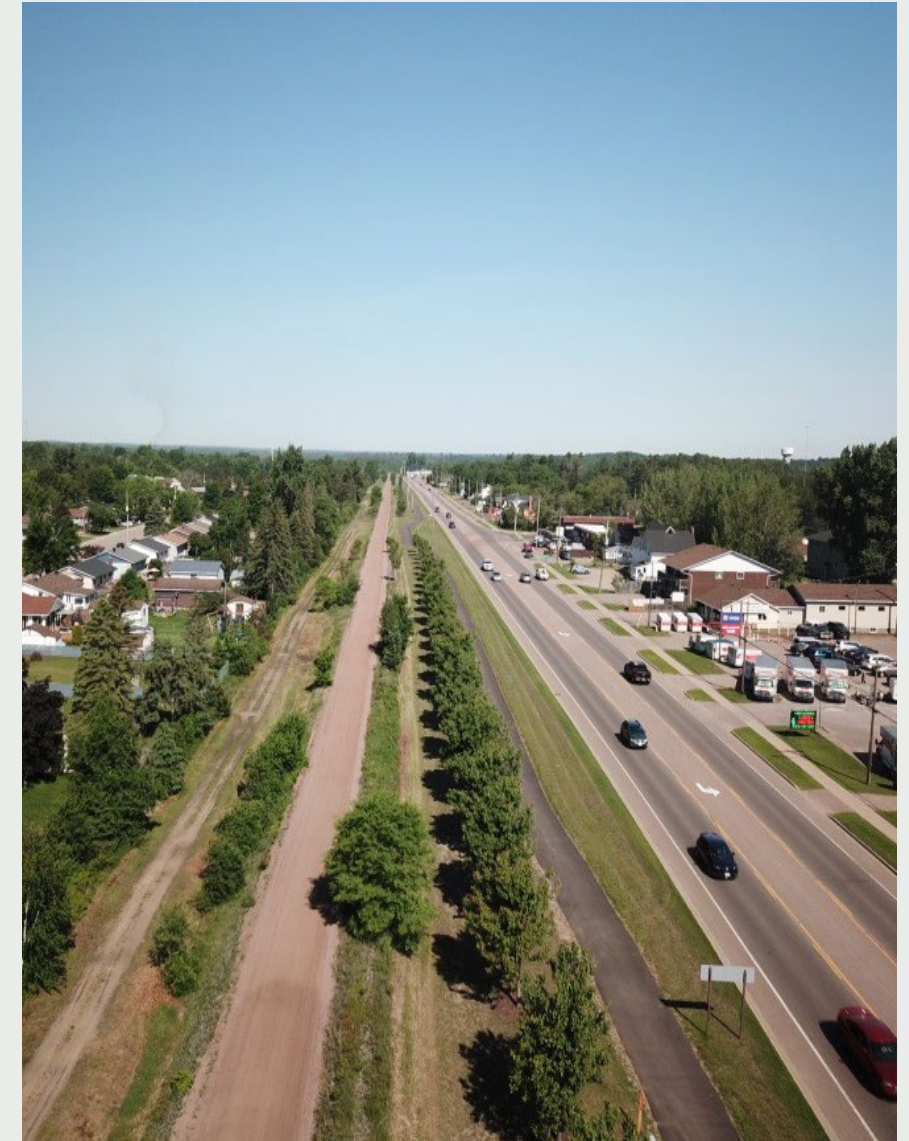
Phase 2

Secondary Destinations will address entrance signs, trail, directional signage, and water access points. This phase will expand the network into residential and recreational areas.

Phase 3

Full Completion will include the remaining park and facility signs. This final phase will ensure the entire community benefits from the unified wayfinding approach.

A maintenance program will include annual inspections, cleaning, and touch-ups, ensuring the signs remain in excellent condition over the long term.



Budget Overview

Two approaches were considered for cost efficiency:

Option	Estimated Cost Per Sign	Estimate for 20x Signs	Lifespan / Durability	Pros	Cons
Fabricating New Signs	\$2,000 – \$8,000	\$40,000 – \$160,000	10–15+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full design flexibility• New, clean look• Longer lifespan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher upfront cost• Longer lead time
Vinyl Overlay on Existing Signs	\$250 – \$800 (material + prep)	\$5,000 – \$16,000	3–7 years (depending on condition and weather)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Much lower cost• Faster turnaround• Less waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only as good as the underlying sign• Shorter lifespan• May look like a patch if existing signs are worn

Additional cost considerations include labour, site preparation, and ongoing maintenance requirements.



Installation & Design Templates

Typical Sign Elements:

- ▶ Rules, guidelines, or etiquette for users
- ▶ Permitted uses and restrictions
- ▶ Emergency contact information (e.g., 911, maintenance, reporting issues)
- ▶ Wayfinding details (maps, directions, distances, destinations, or layout)
- ▶ Visuals/imagery to highlight key features, destinations, or attractions
- ▶ Relevant logos and branding

Notes:

- ▶ When selecting text for signage, choose Raleway or a similar typeface (san serif). It can be found [here](#) for download.
- ▶ High contrast between background and text for easy readability. A minimum light reflective value of 70% is recommended to meet AODA requirements.

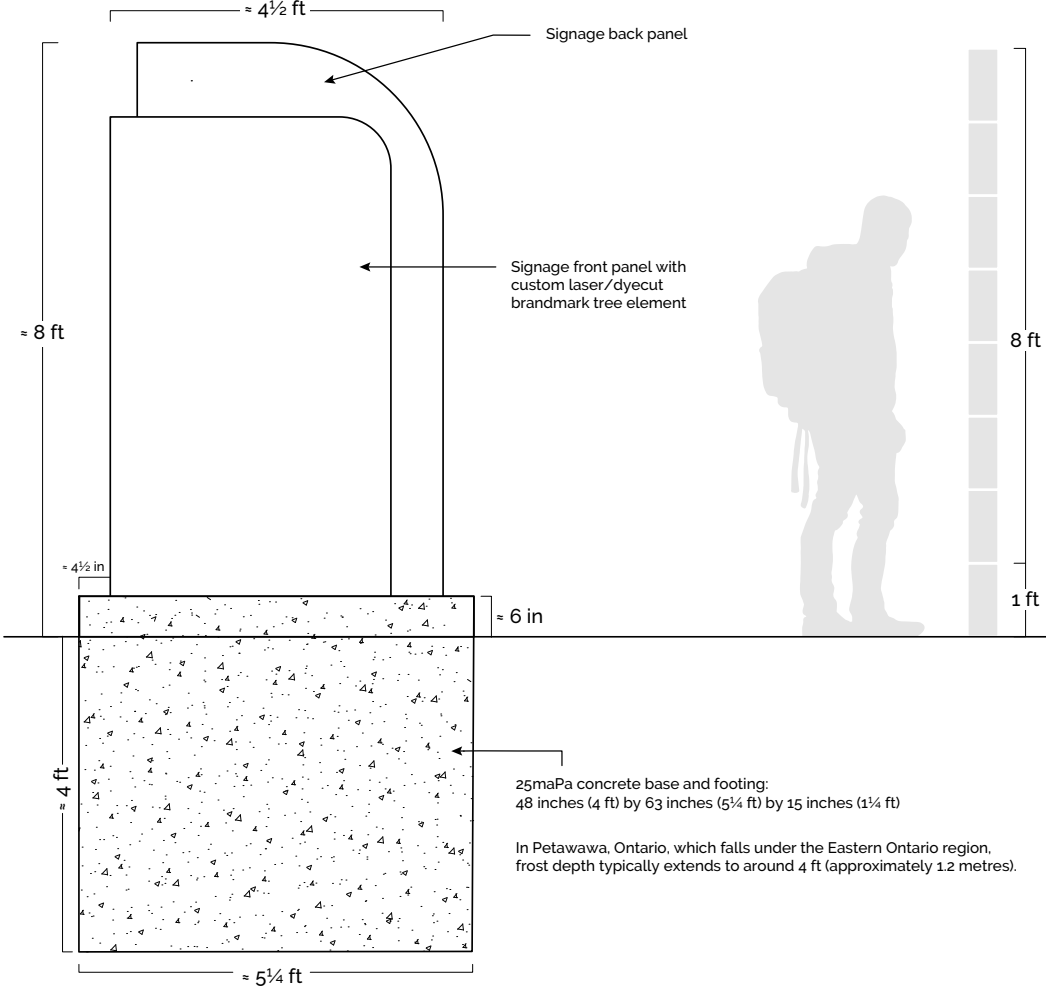
Disclaimer: Installer to prepare shop drawings detailing installation hardware, materials and modification to base details presented. Shop drawings should be reviewed by municipal engineering staff or consulting/construction engineer prior to execution.

Sign Content

- ▶ Petawawa Logo
- ▶ Location Name
- ▶ Location Address
- ▶ Pathway Map
- ▶ Points of Interest



The main surface area of all signage will remain white to ensure clarity and allow for easy updates. This adaptable design makes it possible to refresh information for future events or changing community needs without replacing the entire sign.



25maPa concrete base and footing:
48 inches (4 ft) by 63 inches (5¼ ft) by 15 inches (1¼ ft)

In Petawawa, Ontario, which falls under the Eastern Ontario region,
frost depth typically extends to around 4 ft (approximately 1.2 metres).

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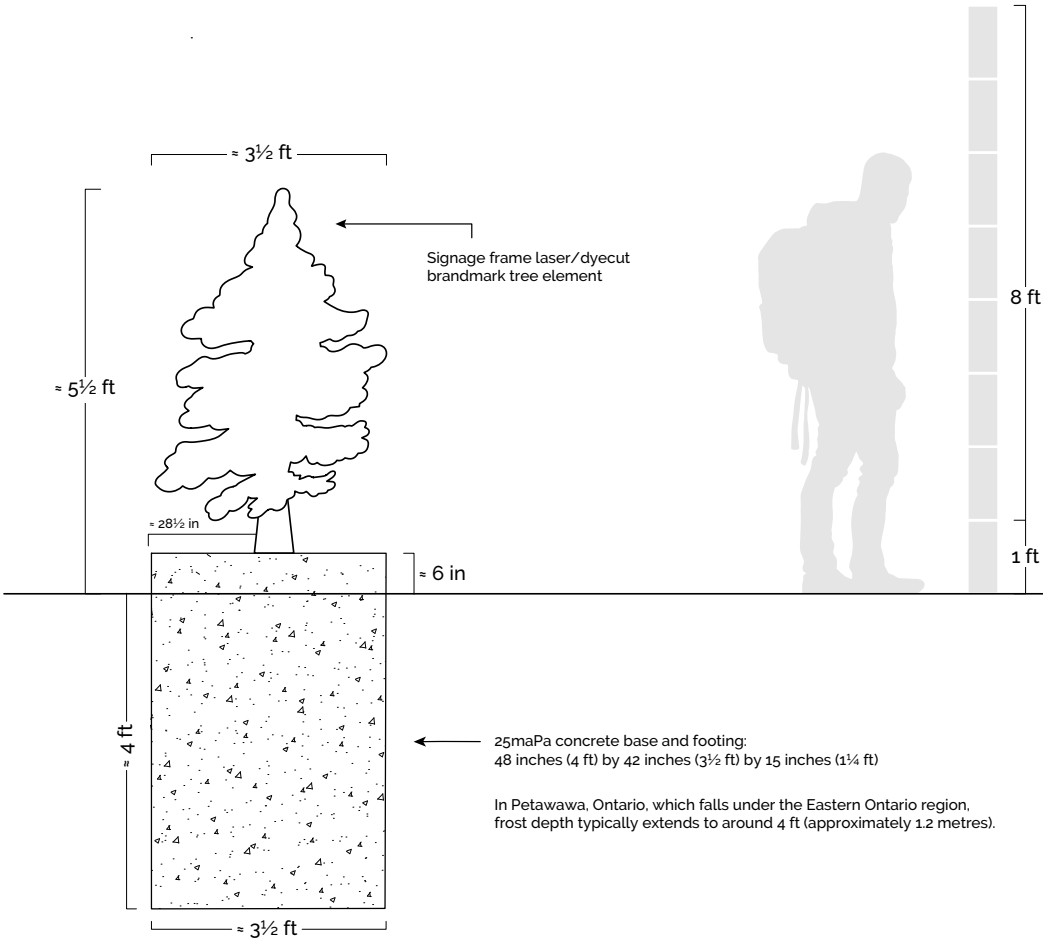
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Sign Content

- ▶ Local Art Installations
- ▶ Local Event Posters & Promotional Materials
- ▶ Creative Works Showcasing Local Artists



The primary surface will remain in Hunter Green, providing a clear, consistent background that enhances legibility and supports easy graphic application. This adaptable design allows information to be updated or refreshed for future events and evolving community needs without requiring full sign replacement.



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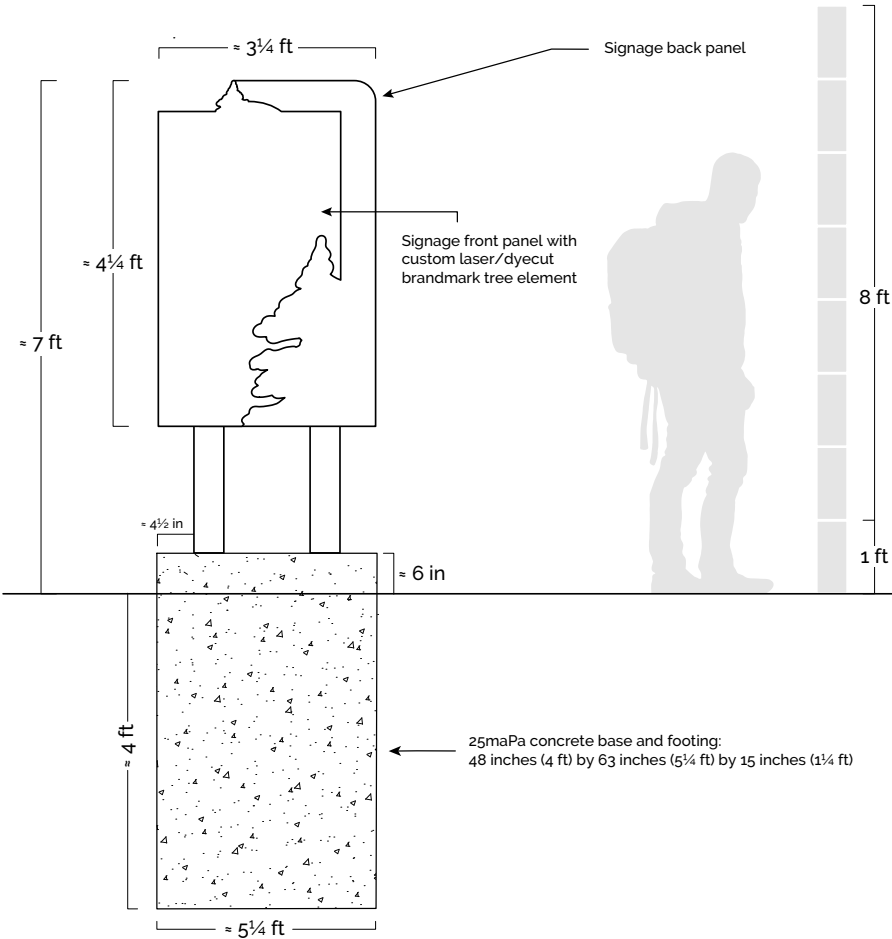
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- ▶ Petawawa Logo
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- ▶ Location Address
- ▶ Points of Interest
- ▶ Location Directional Arrows
- ▶ Trail Rules
- ▶ Activity Icons
- ▶ Local Attractions



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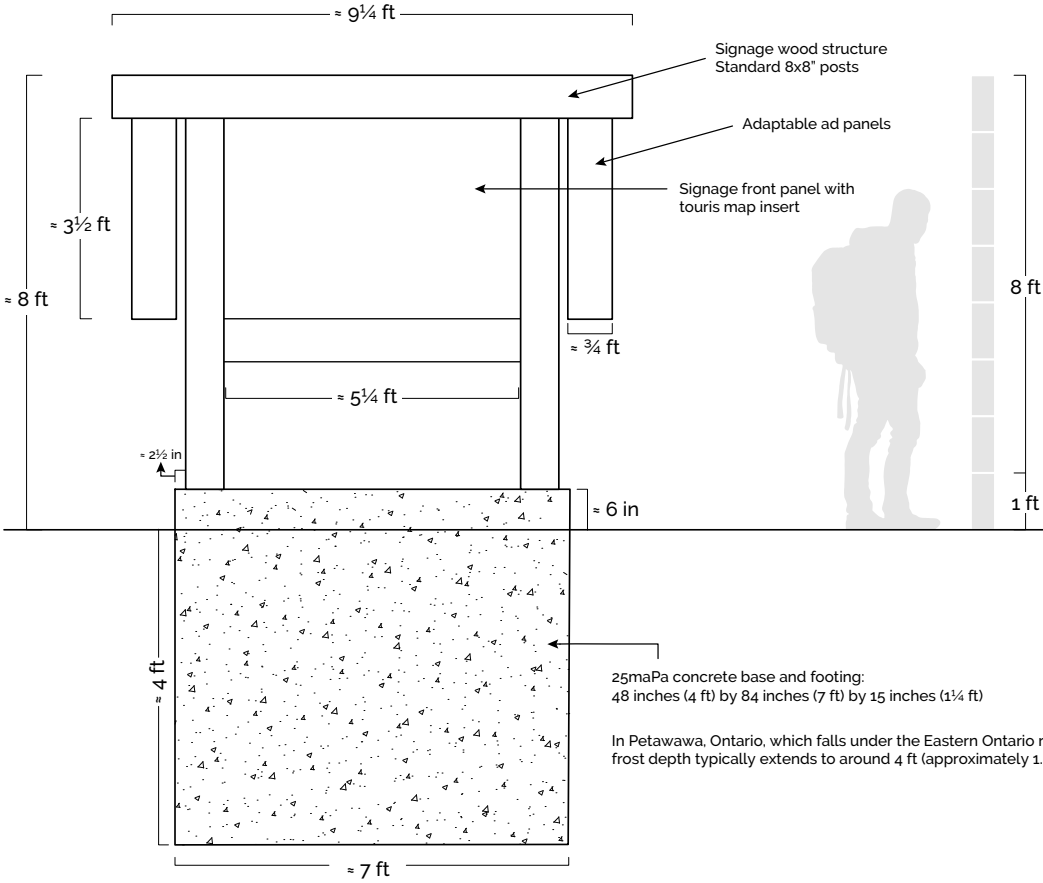
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- ▶ Activity Icons
- ▶ Local Attractions
- ▶ Emergency Contact Information



Includes a clear, detailed map of the trail network, highlighting trail routes, distances, difficulty levels, and key landmarks. It often provides safety information, trail etiquette, and rules or regulations for the area, such as permitted activities and wildlife precautions.

Additional content may include points of interest, restroom or parking locations, and emergency contact information.



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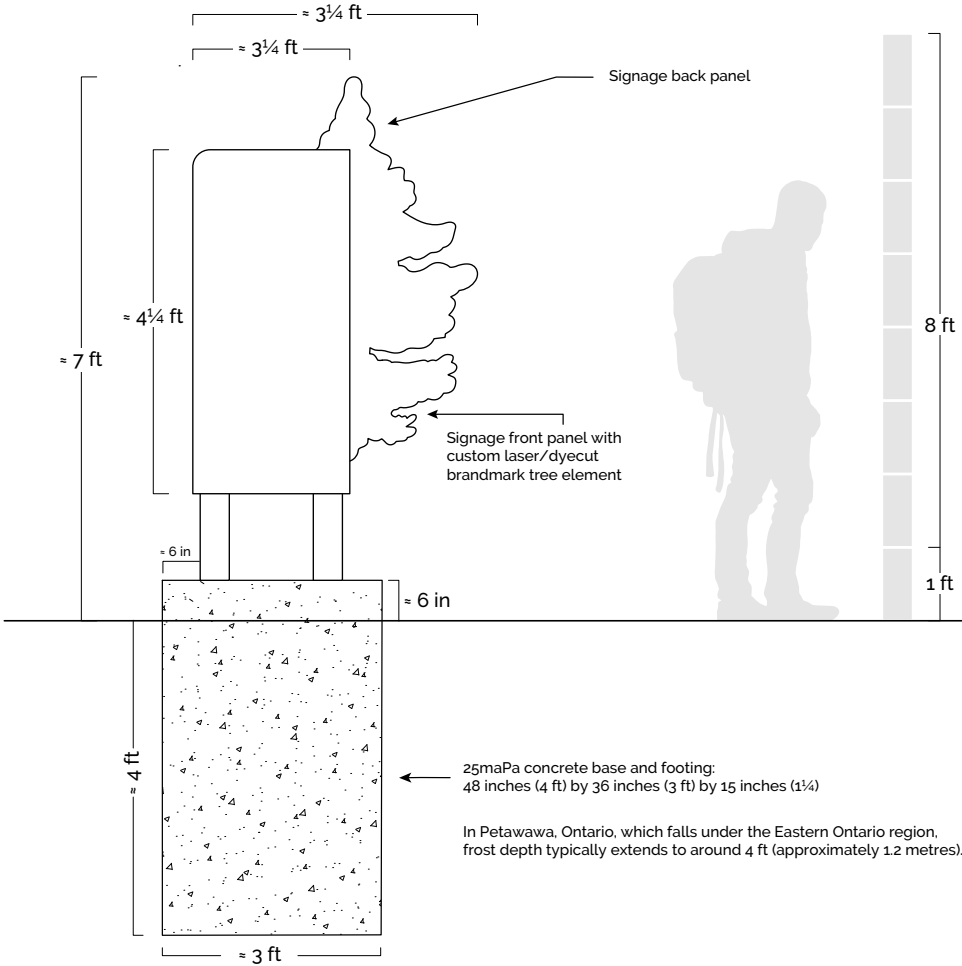
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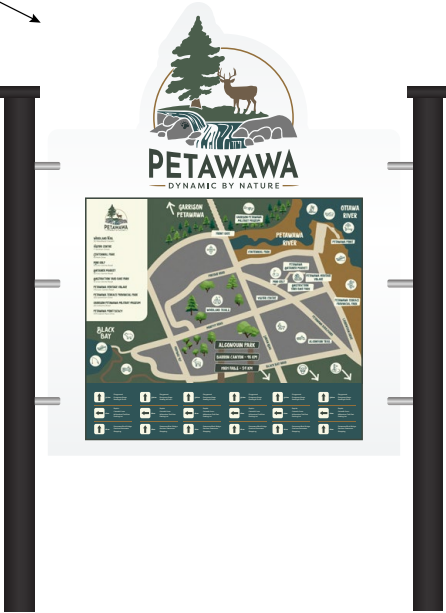
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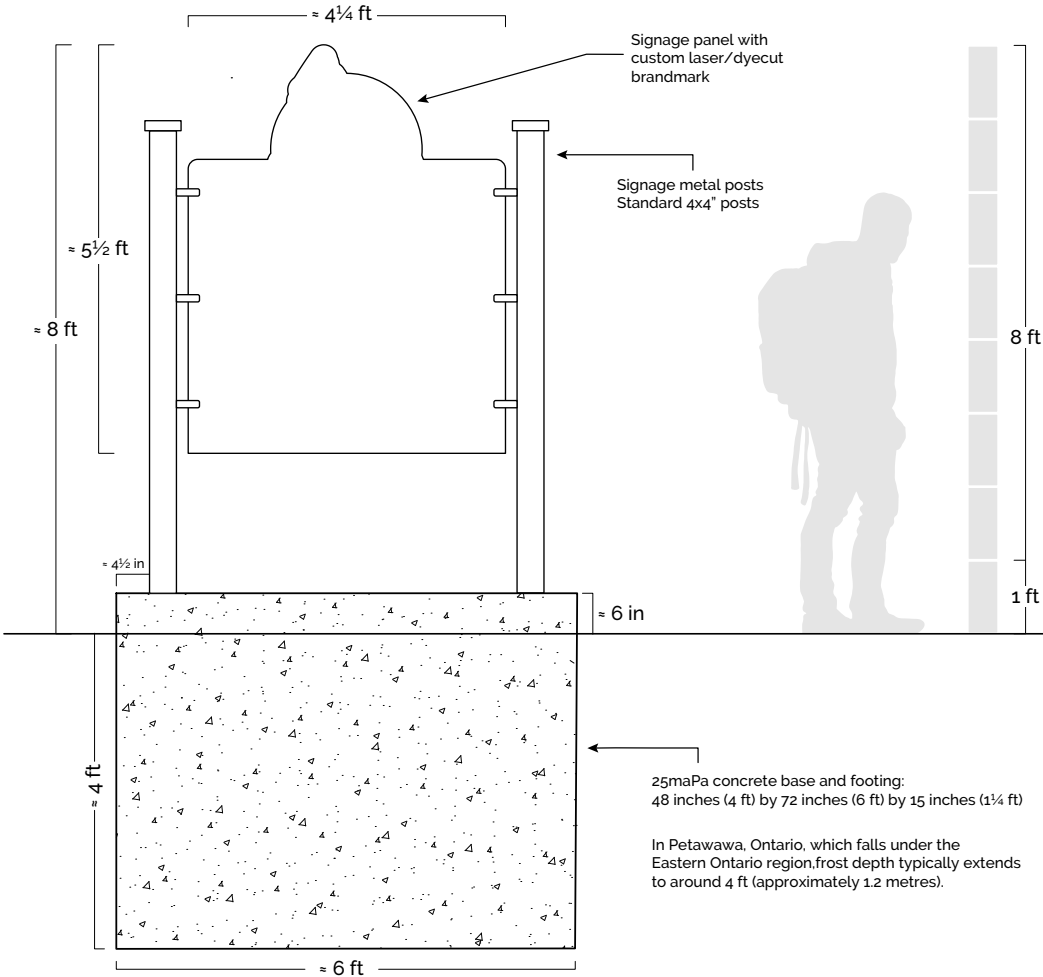
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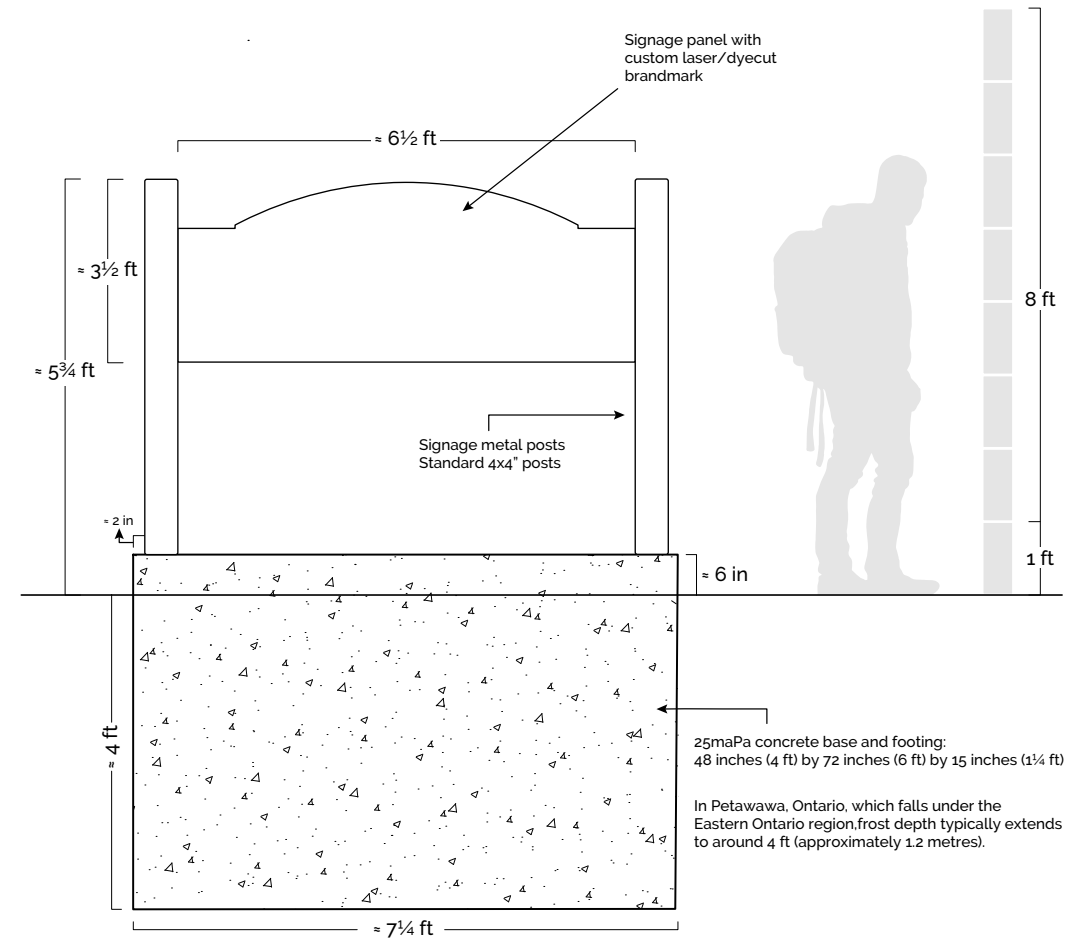
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 www.petawawa.ca

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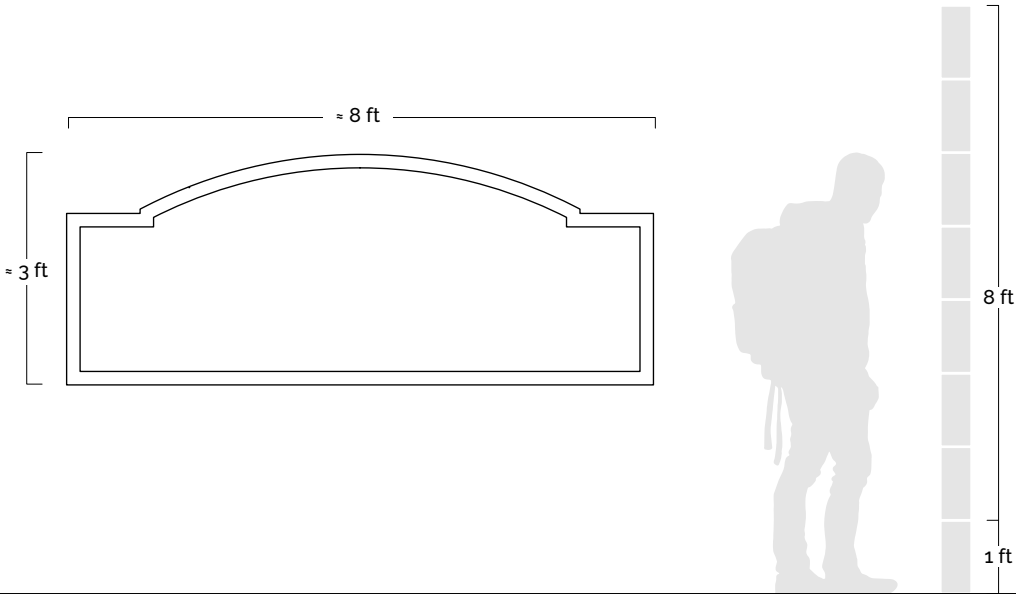
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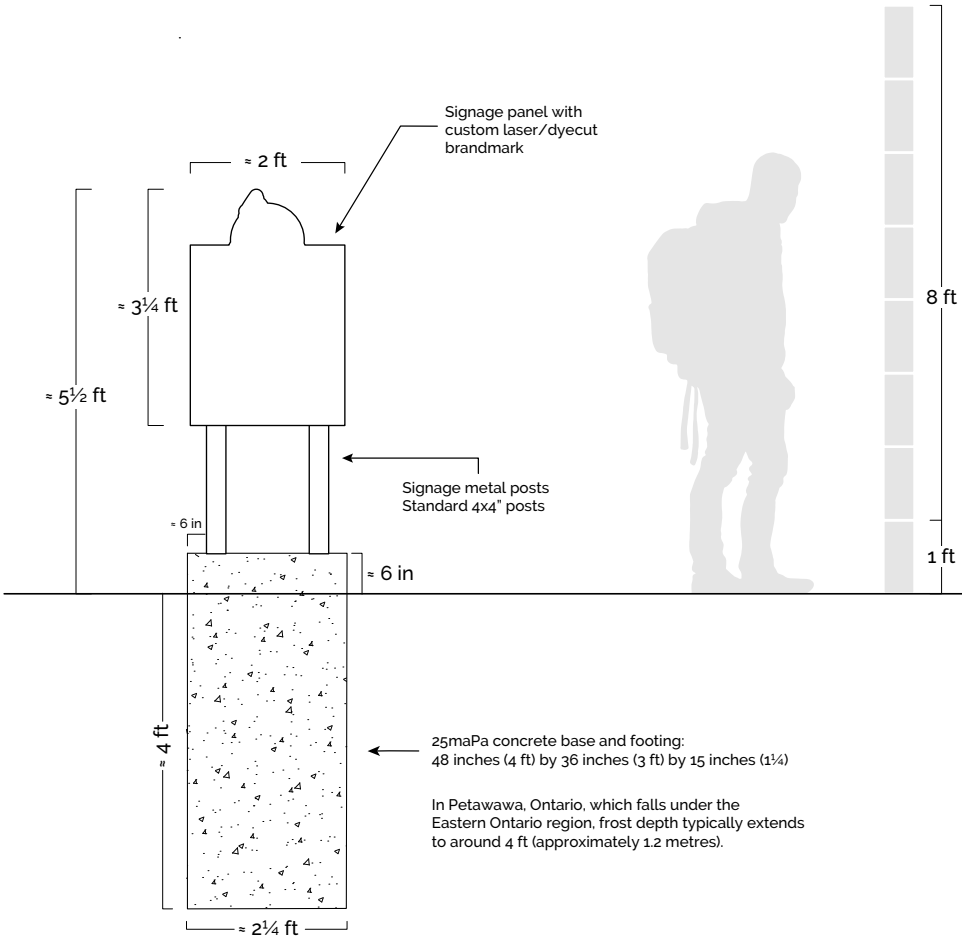
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- ▶ Activity Icons
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Playground 500m

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