

The City of Roseville values the integrity of its brand and visual identity. Interpretive signs within open space and along bike trails are just one of the many tools used to promote Roseville's identity. The following guidelines help focus the content, design and layout for interpretive signs within Roseville. *This Style Guide captures the spirit of Roseville's visual identity, and should by no means limit the creativity of professional illustrators and designers contracted by the City of Roseville for interpretive sign design.*

Sign Content

Think Levels – Then Think Design: The Four Conceptual Levels

Excerpts from *Environmental Interpretation: A Practical Guide for People with Big Ideas and Small Budgets* by Sam H. Ham.

The four levels give each part of the sign a purpose: In level I, you use a theme-title to quickly communicate the principle idea or message of your sign; in level II, you quickly show viewers the organization of the five or fewer main ideas used to support the theme; in level III, you present the "color," those few selected facts, analogies and other information that help you explain each of the main ideas shown in level II; and in level IV, you quickly suggest ways for viewers to follow up their new knowledge or interest in the topic.

I. Theme Awareness (Title) - In one or two seconds, the viewer should recognize and understand the theme. Display this level prominently in the title of the sign. Use theme titles, not topic titles. For example: "We're Losing Our Soil," not simply "Soil Erosion". Structure artistic design to compliment and support the theme.

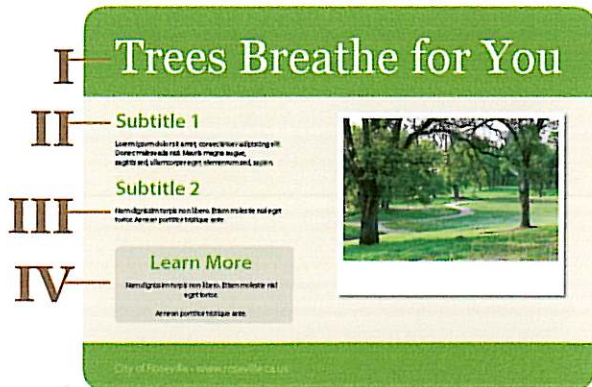
II. Awareness of the Message Components (Subtitles) – Limit your organization of the message in level II to five or fewer main ideas; the fewer, the better. Accomplish this with conspicuous headings or subheadings, colors, illustrations, or other "visual separators." If headings are used, they should be conspicuous but appear less prominent than the title of the exhibit. When possible, build sub-themes into level II headings. For example, if your development of the above theme were to be organized around two main ideas, the level II headings might be "Wind and Rain- The Causes" and "You and I- The Culprits".

III. Selected Details (Main Body Text and Illustrations) - Include only those facts, ideas and other information necessary to communicate that part of the theme. A viewer ought to be able to read each body of text quickly—the briefer it is, the better—and immediately see its relationship to the theme of the exhibit. Limit main copy in level III to an amount that could be read by an average reader in 45 to 60 seconds maximum. Given current estimates of average reading speed, this would be about 225 to 300 words. Use short paragraphs; two or three sentences is not too short. Avoid having even one technical term, and limit sentence length to ten to fifteen words where possible. Edit out passive tenses and substitute active verbs. For example: "Rain strips unprotected soils from our land," not "Unprotected soils are being stripped from our land by rain." Use personal words as much as possible (e.g. you, me, I, we, he, she, they), and stay informal in tone. Use bridging techniques such as analogies and comparisons to link your explanations to things viewers already know or care about. Don't include transitions from one part of the text to another.

IV. How Viewers Can Act on Their New Knowledge - This level can take many forms depending on the type of sign and its intended lifespan. It might be the name of a brochure, pamphlet or book that the viewer could get; it could be a box of brochures or information sheets attached to the display itself; it could be a schedule of future activities related to the topics of the display; or it could simply be a suggestion of a place to go, a trail to hike, etc., in order to see something related. Be selective—give only one or two suggestions.

Sample Signs

The following examples showcase the flexibility of the Interpretive Sign Style Guide. Color palette, fonts and layout options make it possible to design any type of interpretive sign while staying true to the Style Guide.



Legend

- I. Theme Awareness (Title)**
- II. Awareness of the Message Components (Subtitles)**
- III. Selected Details (Main Body Text and Illustrations)**
- IV. How Viewers Can Act on Their New Knowledge**



Interpretive Sign Style Guide



Sign Colors

Choose **one** of the following as a main accent color for each sign:



"Blueberry"

PMS 294 or CMYK 100/68/7/28



"Brown"

PMS 469 or CMYK 0/52/100/62



"Dark Wasabi"

PMS 377 or CMYK 45/0/100/24

Use the following as the **background** color for each sign:



"Natural"

PMS 4545 or CMYK 0/3/19/6

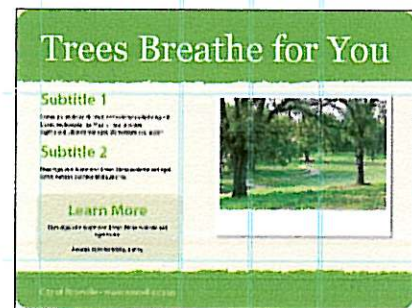
Sign Grid

Outside Margins: 1.5"

Top Color Bar: approximately 1/4 the sign height

Bottom Color Bar: approximately 1/6 the sign height

5-Column Grid: Divide sign content among five (5) evenly spaced columns to create a grid. The grid helps content align and stay organized, which will improve readability to viewers. Grid columns should be approximately 1/4" apart.



Viewing Distances and Minimum Height of Letters

Viewing Distance	1 to 4 ft.	4 to 6 ft.	30 ft.	60 ft.
Titles	3/4" > 72 pt.	1" > 96 pt.	4" > 384 pt.	6" > 576 pt.
Subtitles	1/2" > 48 pt.	3/4" > 72 pt.	3" > 288 pt.	5" > 480 pt.
Main Body Text	1/4" > 24 pt.	1/2" > 48 pt.	2" > 192 pt.	4" > 384 pt.
Captions and Specimen Labels	3/16" > 18 pt.	1/4" > 24 pt.	n/a	n/a

Interpretive Sign Style Guide



Fonts



Title

Font: Georgia Regular

Color: White



Subtitle

Font: Myriad Pro Semibold

Color: Use the chosen accent color



Main Body Copy

Font: Myriad Pro Light

Color: Black



Photo Captions

Font: Myriad Pro Light Italic

Color: Use the chosen accent color



Footer

Font: Myriad Pro Light

Color: Natural

Logo Usage

The City of Roseville logo should not appear on the sign.

Graphics

Whenever possible, photographs, technical drawings, and professional illustrations should be used. Clipart-type graphics are not allowed.

Non-Profit or Grant Funded Signs

If the interpretive sign needs to recognize funding from a grant or a non-profit agency, utilize the fonts outlined in this Style Guide as the basis for written recognition. If guidelines for the grant require use of the agency's logo, use a high-resolution (300 dpi) or vector version of the logo.

Approval

Before moving an Interpretive Sign into production, all designs must be approved by the City of Roseville department that is managing the project.

Recommended Reading for Interpretive Sign Design

Environmental Interpretation - A Practical Guide for People with Big Ideas and Small Budgets, by Sam H. Ham. North American Press, 1992.

Signs, Trails and Wayside Exhibits: Connecting People and Places, by Suzanne Trapp, Michael Gross, and Ron Zimmerman. UW-SP Foundation Press, Inc., Interpreter's Handbook Series, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point: 1994.