

CHAPTER 5 Public Realm Improvements

5.1 OVERVIEW

This chapter focuses on the public realm, that is, spaces within and directly adjacent to public rights-of-way (ROWs), including streets, Oso Creek, the rail corridor, and the freeway edge. The character of these corridors will influence each person’s perception of Laguna Niguel as they move through the Specific Plan area, whether on the train, driving, bicycling, walking, or horseback riding. The overarching goal of this chapter is to encourage movement between uses by modes other than automobiles and to create friendly and aesthetically pleasing streets and public spaces.

The City will undertake several key public realm improvements, including the multi-use trail and slope landscaping along Oso Creek and landscape screening between Camino Capistrano and the railroad ROW. The City may also provide entry treatments and expand the existing wayfinding sign system. Other improvements will be made incrementally in conjunction with individual development projects.

Section 5.2 contains plans, cross sections, and descriptions of the character of each street and of the Oso Creek corridor, illustrating the intended character of each.

Section 5.3 describes improvements that may be undertaken by the City, including:

- Section 5.3.1 Improvements along Oso Creek: the multi-use path between the creek and Forbes Road and the slope between the creek and Cabot Road
- Section 5.3.2 Entry Treatments
- Section 5.3.3 Wayfinding Sign System

5.2 CHARACTER OF STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACES

Figure 3-18A through Figure 3-26 illustrate the intended design along each street. These plans and cross sections illustrate typical conditions along each street. Complete plans of streets on which curb lines will be relocated in the future are in Chapter 3 (Policies and Development Plans). Figure 3-4A through Figure 3-11B depict existing as well as proposed future conditions to illustrate required changes to achieve the vision for the Specific Plan area. The description, plans, and cross sections for each street address:



Shade trees make a street more walkable and attractive



Outdoor dining on a pedestrian-oriented street



Street can accommodate bicycles as well as cars



Pedestrian-oriented elements make walking more interesting

- Illustrative ROW and lane configuration, including landscaped medians
- Recommended multi-use trail along Oso Creek for equestrians, bicycles and pedestrians
- Minimum required sidewalk width, which may be a combination of public right-of-way (which may require a dedication) and easement for sidewalk purposes
- Required sidewalk configuration, which typically includes an 8-foot-wide continuous landscaped parkway and a 6- to 10-foot-wide paved walkway
- Required setback width, which is a function of the adjacent ground floor use
- Illustrative setback treatment, which is also a function of the adjacent ground floor use. The cross sections in Figure 3-18A through Figure 3-26 illustrate the setback treatment. Along Forbes Road and other pedestrian-oriented retail streets, the cross sections show the required treatment adjacent to the predominant ground floor use on each street segment. Required setback treatment for different ground floor treatments are described in Section 4.4.6.



Illustrative sketch of the east side of Forbes Road and other pedestrian-oriented streets with required streetscape improvements.

5.3 PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS BY THE CITY

5.3.1 Improvements along Oso Creek

The multi-use trail along Oso Creek, combined with the native woodland/riparian planting on the adjacent slope, is the primary

usable public open space in the Specific Plan Area. Seating areas should be added where possible, for example, at the “kink” in the creek adjacent to the Metrolink station. In addition, a small terraced park could be created on the slope west of Oso Creek north of Crown Valley Parkway in an area with the least slope. A pedestrian bridge across the creek would link the terraced park to the Oso Creek trail.

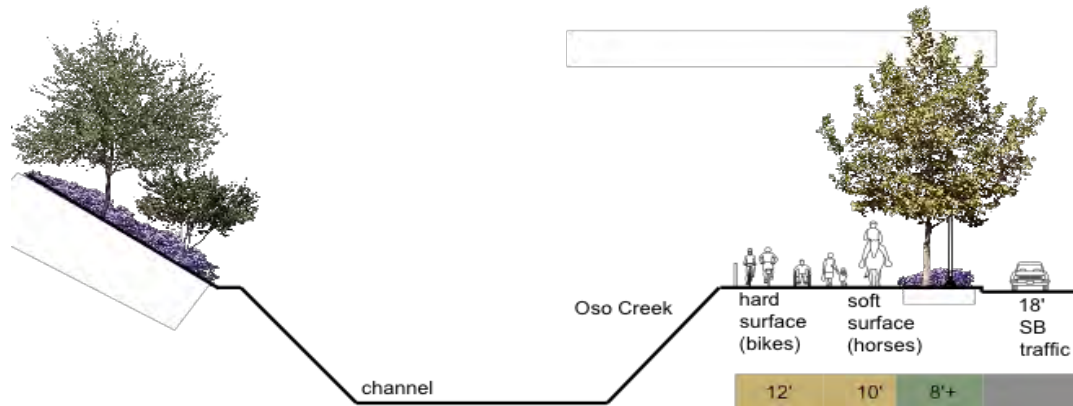


FIGURE 5-1 Typical Cross Section of Oso Creek and Forbes Road North



FIGURE 5-2 Illustrative View of Multi-use Trail North of Crown Valley Parkway

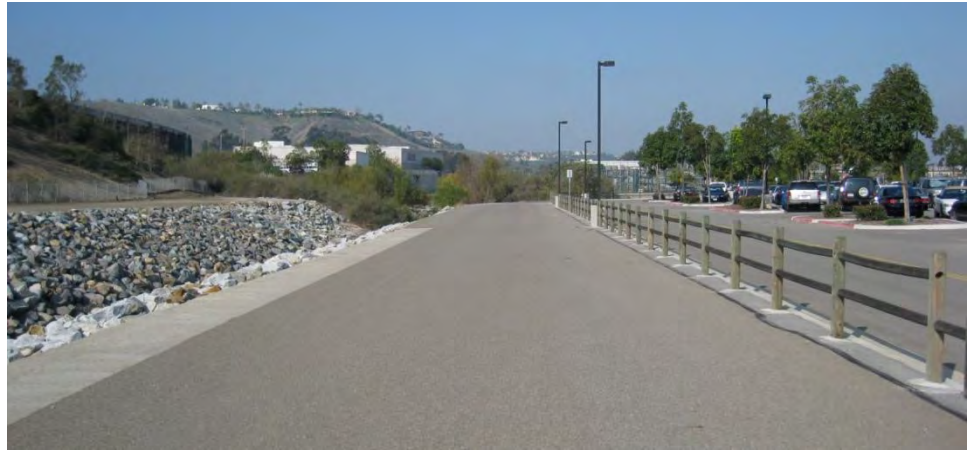


FIGURE 5-3 Before and After Illustrative View of Multi-use Trail and Class I Bikeway on Forbes Road, South of Crown Valley Parkway

The steep slopes adjacent and to the west of Oso Creek provide an opportunity to create a native creekside/woodland landscape to enhance the character of the creek, giving it a more natural appearance.

Tree Palette

Slope Trees

- Blue Oak (*Quercus douglasii*)
- California Buckeye (*Aesculus californica*)
- Shore Pine (*Pinus contorta*)
- Flowering Ash (*Fraxinus depetala*)

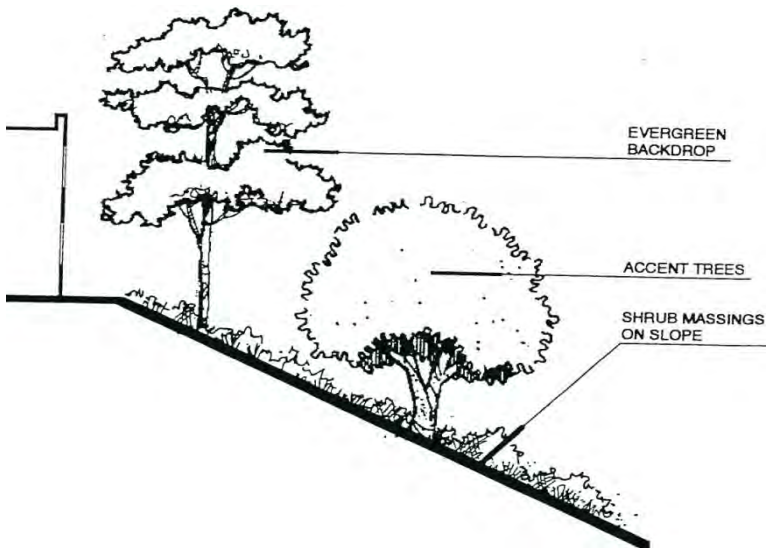
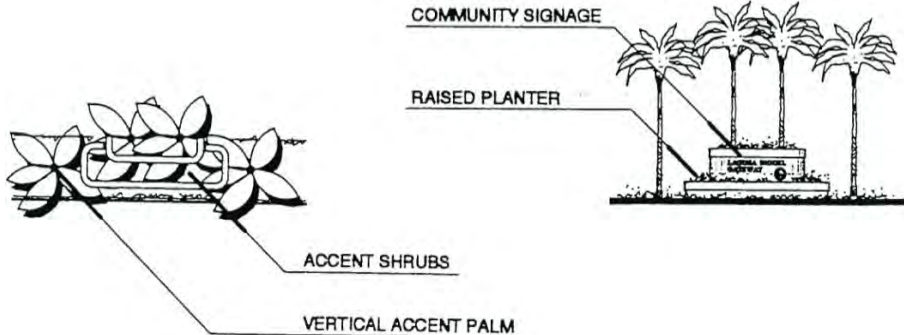


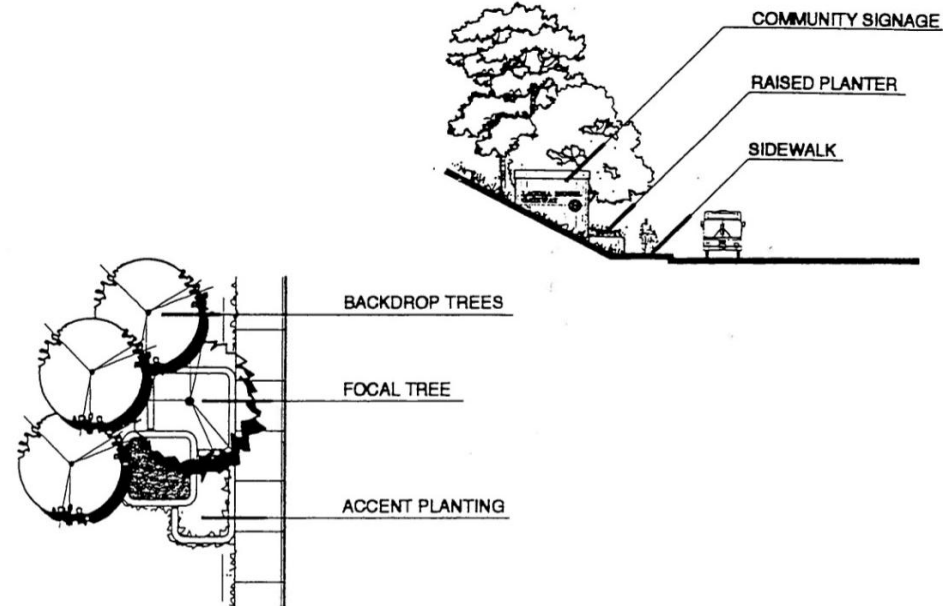
FIGURE 5-4 Slopes on West Side of Oso Creek: Typical Plan View and Cross Section

5.3.2 Entry Treatments

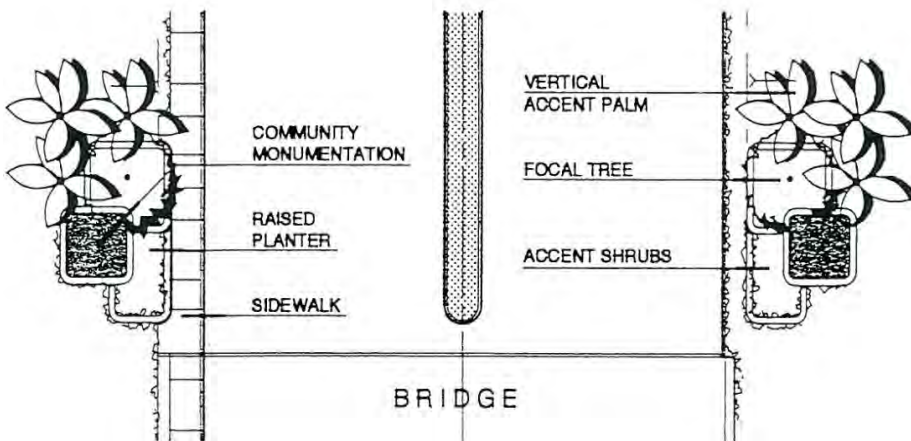
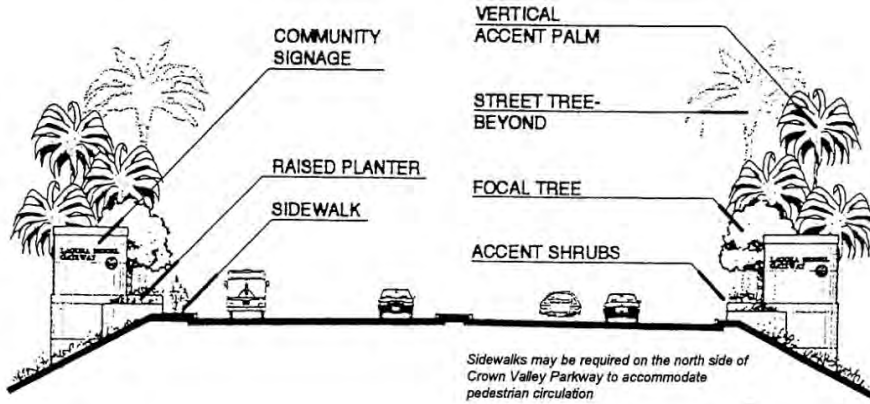
The use of raised planters at entries into the Specific Plan area, in conjunction with wayfinding signs (see Section 5.3.3 [Wayfinding Sign Program]), is recommended to reinforce those gateways. Typically the raised planters would be located in the landscaped setback adjacent to the ROW. The following sketches illustrate the general concept for planters on several streets.



Illustrative Avery Parkway entry treatment



Illustrative Cabot Road entry treatment



Illustrative Crown Valley Parkway entry treatment

5.3.3 Wayfinding Sign Program

A Wayfinding Sign Program for the Specific Plan Area is recommended and consists of a hierarchy of signs intended to:

- Strengthen the District’s identity
- Provide directional and informational signage to assist motorists and visitors in finding their way around the Specific Plan area
- Establish an enduring quality for the Specific Plan area, particularly when viewed from the I-5 Freeway corridor
- Beautify the Specific Plan area

The various types of project-wide signage are described below and illustrated in Figure 5-5 through Figure 5-8. Potential locations for the sign types are depicted in Figure 5-9. District identity and directional signs have already been installed.

Freeway Gateway Identification Pylons. Freeway signage will likely be the first introduction to the project for most visitors. The Freeway Gateway Identification Pylons will identify the Specific Plan Area and key destinations for motorists moving at a relatively high speed. The design should be simple, attractive, and free of clutter, and complementary to the existing district wayfinding signs. The sign concept illustrated in Figure 5-5 is an internally illuminated painted aluminum cabinet with an independent “halo” ring to match that in the existing district directional signs, which would slice through the cabinet.

Three locations have been identified for these signs adjacent to the I-5 Freeway. One sign will be located north of Crown Valley Parkway along the freeway frontage; another will be placed south of Avery Parkway along the freeway frontage. The destinations on these signs can distinguish between access to the District via Avery Parkway or Crown Valley Parkway. A third sign may be located midway between the two in the vicinity of the Metrolink Station.

Standing at approximately 55 feet high (26 feet above the freeway grade) and 12 feet wide, the signs will contain the Laguna Niguel Gateway name as well as the name of up to six destinations, districts, or major businesses in the Specific Plan area. Figure 7-14 illustrates how the business names should be incorporated. The City will determine which businesses to list on the Freeway Gateway Identification Pylons. At its option, the City may require payment of a fee from each listed business. Businesses and destinations listed on the pylons should have name recognition, which will attract visitors

to the Specific Plan Area. Such businesses will encourage motorists to exit at either Crown Valley Parkway or Avery Parkway. Once in the Specific Plan area, directional signage and signs on individual businesses will guide motorists to the various districts and destinations.

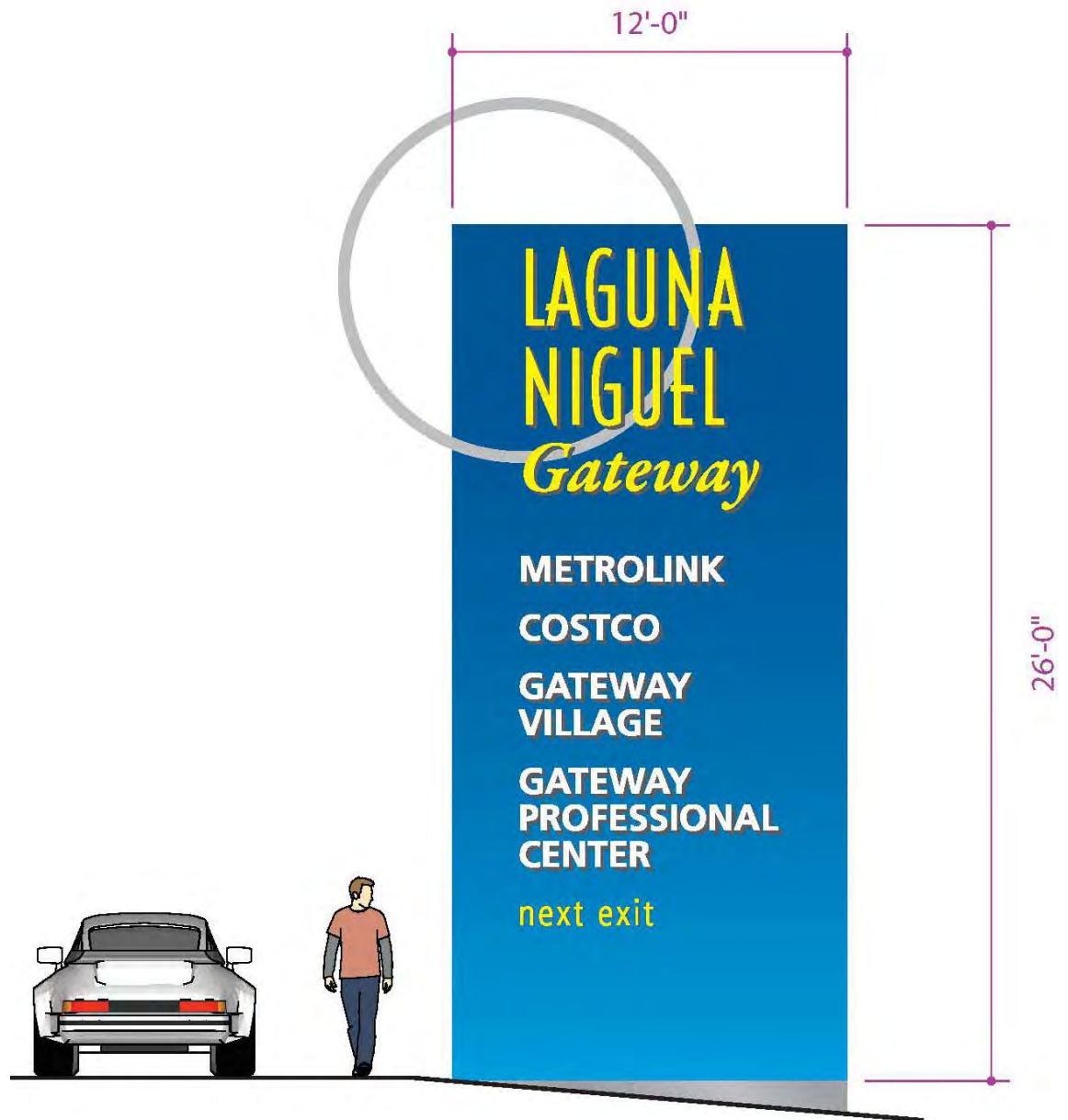
District Identification Signs. The districts within the Specific Plan Area will be identified by these signs, which will also incorporate the signature Laguna Niguel Blue color and the standards design elements established by the sign program. The District Identification Signs are fairly small in scale and are designed to serve the vehicular and pedestrian visitor. The signs stand at 6'-6" high and 3'-6" wide, and lifted 7 feet off the ground by a round metal pole or on City light poles. District Identification Signs are designed to be located throughout the Specific Plan area. Suggested locations for such signage include (1) Camino Capistrano at the northern and southern boundaries of the Specific Plan Area; (2) the intersections of Camino Capistrano and Avery Parkway, and Camino Capistrano and Paseo de Colinas; (3) along Crown Valley Parkway on the northeast and southwest corners of Forbes Road and Cabot Road; and (4) along Cabot Road, approximately 1,600 feet south of Crown Valley Parkway.

District Directional Signs. District Directional Signs are generally located within the heart of each district, directing visitors from district to district. At 4'-6" high and 2'-6" wide and mounted at 7 feet on freestanding poles or street light poles, they will be the smallest signs in the overall project-wide signage program. Figure 5-5 shows text that could appear on a typical sign. Suggested sign locations include (1) along Crown Valley Parkway, just west of Camino Capistrano, approximately 500 feet west of Forbes Road, and in the vicinity of the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor overpass; (2) along Cabot Road 500 feet to the north and south of Crown Valley Parkway, and 500 feet north of Paseo de Colinas; (3) on Paseo de Colinas 500 feet east of Cabot Road and at the intersection with Camino Capistrano; and (4) on Camino Capistrano 900 feet north of Paseo de Colinas.

Median Monument Signs. Where landscaped medians exist or are added at near entries to the Specific Plan Area, monument signs may be used instead of the entry landscape treatments shown in Section 5.3.3.

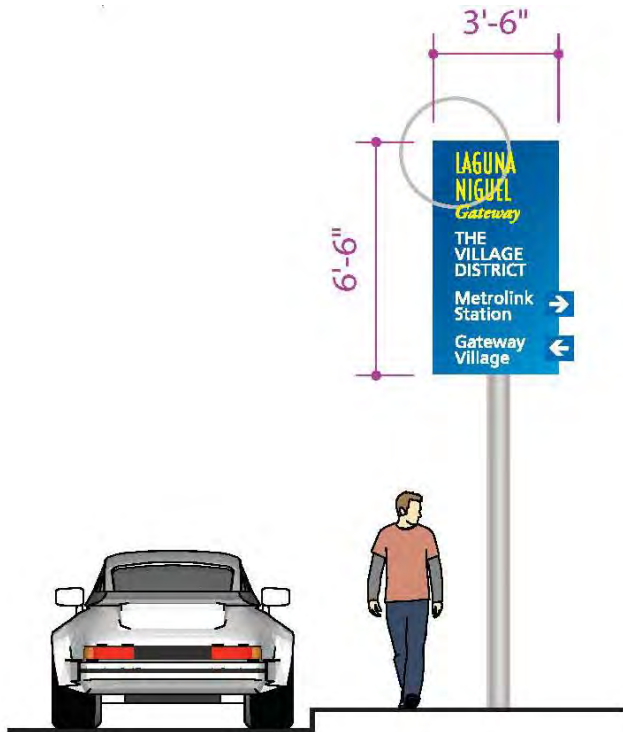
District Banners. Banners have been and may continue to be used to identify and reinforce districts. Their function may be expanded to provide information about current cultural events or community

activities. The banners are intended to assist in creating a sense of place and activity, adding vitality and interest to each district. The City of Laguna Niguel shall be responsible for installing, owning, and maintaining all project-wide signs and banners.



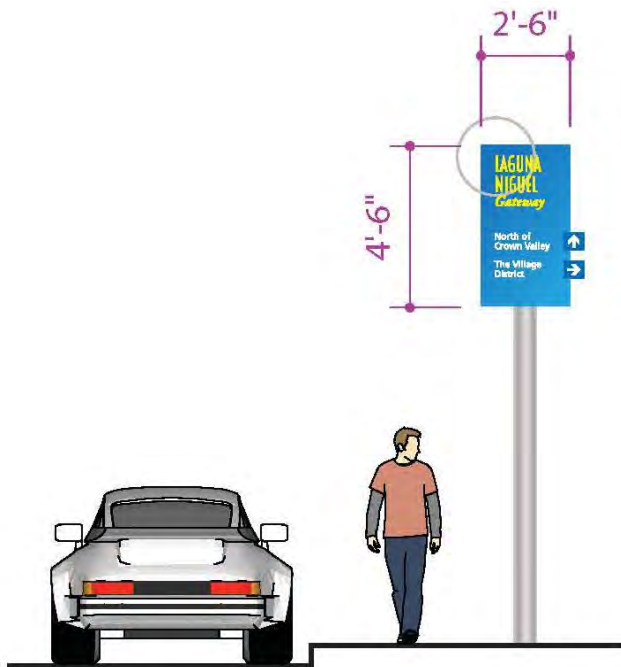
Painted aluminum sign cabinet with background color gradation and internally illuminated copy. A dimensional “halo” ring cuts through cabinet and is expressed on back side or is repeated on the back side, like the existing district directional signs. This example would be located north of Crown Valley Parkway.

FIGURE 5-5 Sign Type 1: Freeway Gateway Identification Pylon



Painted aluminum sign panel with reflective vinyl copy and arrows.
Applied arrow shapes.

FIGURE 5-6 Sign Type 2: District Identification Sign



Painted aluminum sign panel with reflective vinyl copy and arrows.
Applied arrow shapes.

FIGURE 5-7 Sign Type 3: District Directional Sign



Painted aluminum sign panel with dimensional painted aluminum letters.

FIGURE 5-8 Sign Type 4: Median Monument Sign

Sign Locations

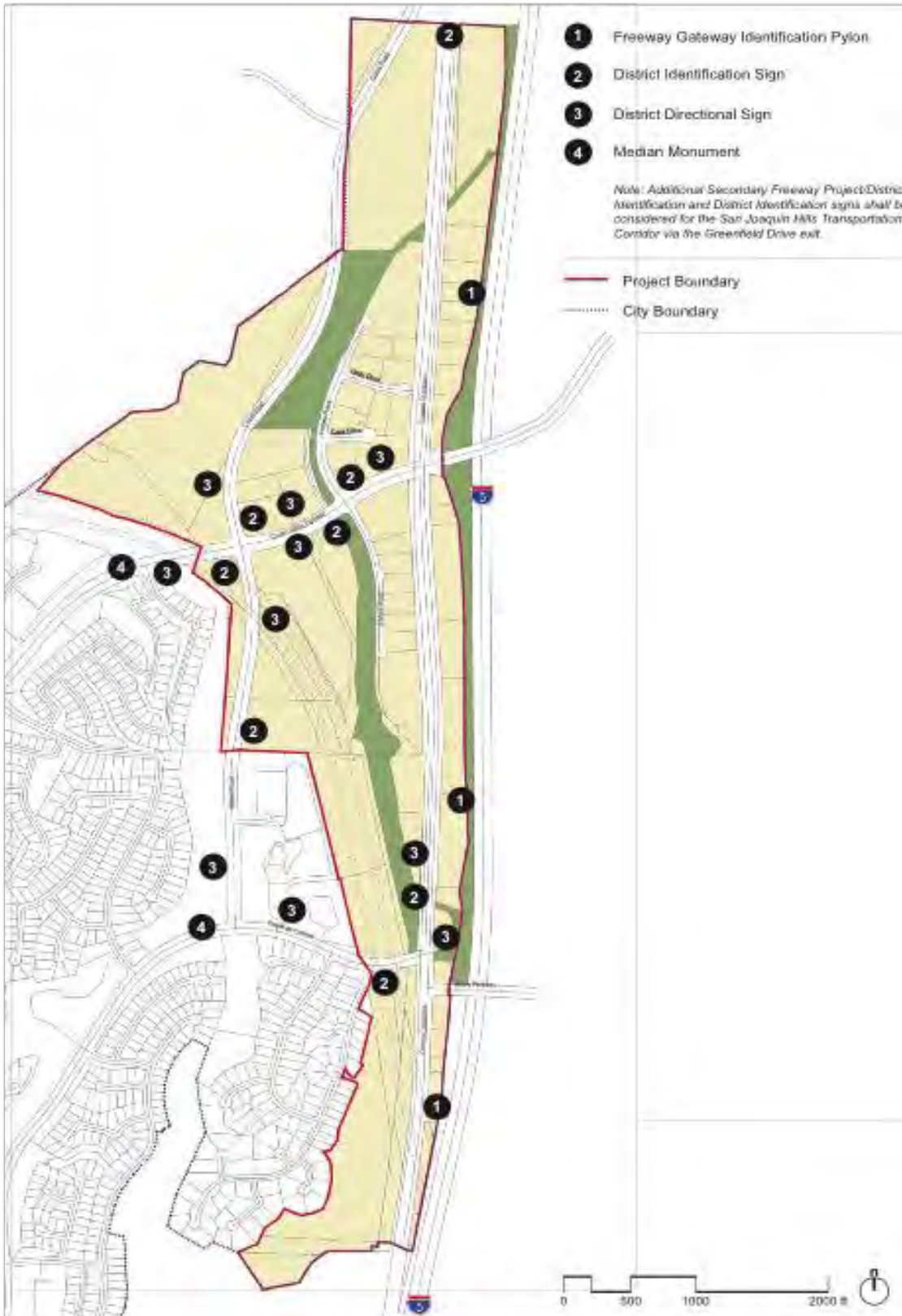


FIGURE 5-9 Preliminary Sign Locations

