



# HILLSDALE STATION INTEGRATION PLAN



September 2012





# INTRODUCTION

This Hillsdale Station Integration Plan has been developed to provide a comprehensive wayfinding and signage program for the neighborhoods around the Hillsdale Caltrain Station in San Mateo, as well as station access and development guidelines for the planned Bay Meadows Phase II (Bay Meadows) development and other private buildings adjacent to the station. The Station Integration Plan assumes that the Hillsdale Station will be relocated northward from its existing site to a new location as part of a greater Transit Center close to 31st Avenue. This relocation will take place when the Caltrain tracks are raised to provide grade separations at 28th and 31st Avenues, which is supported by City policy and reinforced in the Hillsdale Station Area Plan. The Station Area Plan, adopted by the City Council in April 2011, provides a framework for compact and sustainable development in the area surrounding the Hillsdale Caltrain Station and adjacent to planned development in Bay Meadows. That plan envisions a vibrant, mixed-use community conveniently located near local- and region-serving transit, supported by the station location mentioned above, as well as improved vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation.

After station relocation, passengers will be travelling to and from the new Transit Center in many directions, including the 25th Avenue shopping district to the north, Hillsdale Shopping Center to the west, and the San Mateo County Event Center and Bay Meadows to the east. Building upon the foundation laid in the Hillsdale Station Area Plan, this Hillsdale Station Integration Plan serves as a guide for the City of San Mateo to weave the relocated Transit Center into the surrounding circulation network. It focuses on signage to be placed in the public right-of-way near key destinations and along key routes to and from the Transit Center, creating a cohesive feel for the Plan Area. It also provides guidance to the City regarding design for new buildings adjacent to the Transit Center and Caltrain tracks, building upon guidance found in the Station Area Plan. Finally, it addresses the needs of passengers on foot, on bicycle, on transit, and in cars.

The Station Integration Plan is organized into the following sections:

**Plan Area and Destinations.** This section defines the area addressed by this plan (the Plan Area), and identifies key destinations within the Plan Area.

**Connections.** This section identifies the most direct routes that will be used by pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and vehicles to access the station.

**Signage Locations and Types.** This section describes signage types that relate to modes (pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle) and provides a map showing preferred locations for signage throughout the Plan Area.

**Conceptual Signage Design.** This section illustrates a conceptual signage design to serve as a guide for signage in the Plan Area.

**Signage Guidelines.** This section provides sign design and content guidance for both the City and private property owners who will provide directional and wayfinding signage in the Plan Area. Bay Meadows represents a large segment of the Plan Area. Working with the City, Bay Meadows will craft its own branding and wayfinding signage that follows the general parameters of the signage guidelines set forth in this Plan. This will result in Bay Meadows signage that is consistent in language and approach, while allowing a distinctive design and unique neighborhood in San Mateo. Other signage to be created on private property and referencing the Transit Center should follow the guidelines. Any bicycle and pedestrian wayfinding signage created following this Plan should be also be consistent with any future adopted bicycle or pedestrian wayfinding programs.

**Development Guidelines.** These development guidelines are intended to be a checklist for project development to ensure that new building and infrastructure projects support safe, comfortable, and attractive station area circulation, including station and platform access, fencing, and visibility from adjacent properties.

**Interim Signage Locations.** This section provides locations for signage locations centered around the existing Hillsdale Caltrain Station.

## PLAN AREA AND DESTINATIONS

This Plan is intended to improve connections in the area surrounding the Transit Center for visitors and residents alike, by improving the comfort, awareness, and visibility of the environment. As such, the Plan promotes and encourages walking and bicycling as viable means of transportation. For this purpose, the Plan studies the major destinations, transit stops, walking routes, bicycle routes, and decision points within a half mile walking distance, or a 10-minute walk, from the relocated Hillsdale Station and, accordingly, the new Transit Center. The Plan



Area Boundary is informed by this half mile distance, but includes a greater area to the north and south to include important civic and service destinations of citywide interest that could benefit from improved connections to the station. Figure 1: Plan Area and Key Destinations shows the Plan Area Boundary, generally bounded by Highway 92 to the north, 39th Avenue to the south, Hacienda Street to the west, and Highway 101 to the east.

The relocated Hillsdale Caltrain Station is close to a number of destinations including retail/service businesses, offices, parks, public facilities, schools, churches, and housing complexes. While there are many places that people travel to in the Plan Area, destinations are specifically identified for analysis in this Plan if they: generate a high volume of visitors and regional interest; are established districts; are large residential or office complexes; or are civic, educational, or medical institutions. Overall, most destinations are within a 10-minute walk of the station, while all destinations are within a 20-minute walk or 5-minute bike ride.

## CONNECTIONS

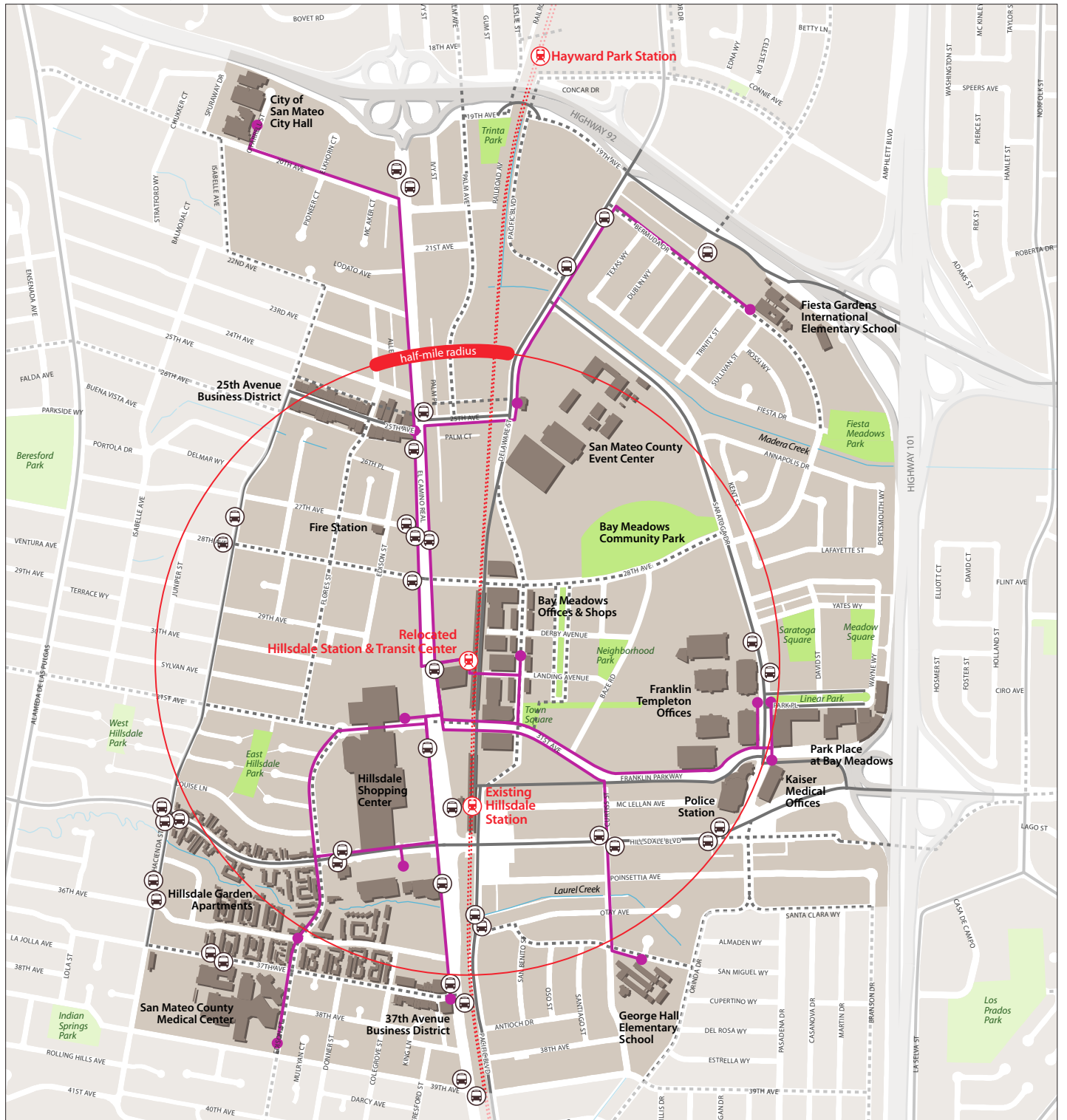
The Plan Area is currently well-served by transit and bicycle facilities. The existing Hillsdale Caltrain Station, located at the intersection of Hillsdale Boulevard and El Camino Real, serves regional commuters as one of the stations with the highest ridership on the Caltrain line. The relocated Hillsdale Caltrain Station, between 28th and 31st Avenues, is expected to continue carrying a high number of daily passengers. Bus service is provided by SamTrans, with major routes along El Camino Real, Hillsdale Boulevard, Saratoga Drive, 28th Avenue, and Delaware Street, and bus stops located throughout the Plan Area. Existing bicycle facilities on Hacienda Street, Hillsdale Boulevard, and Saratoga Drive, supplemented by proposed facilities in Bay Meadows II, provide additional transportation options in the Plan Area. All connections will be improved and facilitated by the provision of two additional street crossings under the Caltrain tracks, at 31st and 28th Avenues.

Figure 2: Transit Stops and Pedestrian Connections illustrates destinations, bus stops (bus icon), existing and proposed bicycle routes (solid and dashed blue line), and the most-likely pedestrian routes (purple line) for destinations to and from the Transit Center. The areas where these different modes overlap are likely to exhibit high vehicular, bicycle, and foot-traffic. They are areas where it is likely that a traveler on one form of transportation would transfer to another form, such as boarding a bus, or look for directions.



Figure 1 Plan Area and Key Destinations



Figure 2 Transit Stops and Pedestrian Connections



- Destination
- Bus Stop
- Bike Facility
- Proposed Bike Facility
- Likely Pedestrian Route



  
 Note: Roadway network includes planned extensions of 28th and 31st Avenues

# SIGNAGE LOCATION AND TYPES

Based on analyses of destinations, transit stops, and pedestrian connections identified in Figures 1 and 2, and field observations, this Plan recommends general wayfinding signage locations, delineated by sign type. As shown in Figure 3: Sign Locations, the suggested sign locations are conceptual and specific to an intersection-level location. Using this map as a guide, the City of San Mateo should establish the exact locations of signage using a finer-grain analysis to assess which intersection corner(s) and where in the right-of-way a sign should be located.

In this Plan, we have identified three categories of signs: pathfinder signs, destination signs and identity kiosks. Pathfinder signs are directional signs placed primarily at intersections along a route to direct pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers to a destination. They are located at decision points, derived from one of the following ways: locations where transit stops, bicycle routes, or pedestrian routes of a major destination intersect, or locations where the navigator must choose which path of many to follow. For example, the intersection of Hillsdale Boulevard and Curtis Street is a location where a bike path, bus stop, and the pedestrian route to George Hall Elementary School intersect, making it a likely location for information to inform navigation choice.

Destination signs communicate to a traveler the arrival to a destination. The key destination in the Plan Area is the Transit Center, but other key destinations should have coordinated signage. Destination signs should be placed primarily near the front entrance or other prominent location.

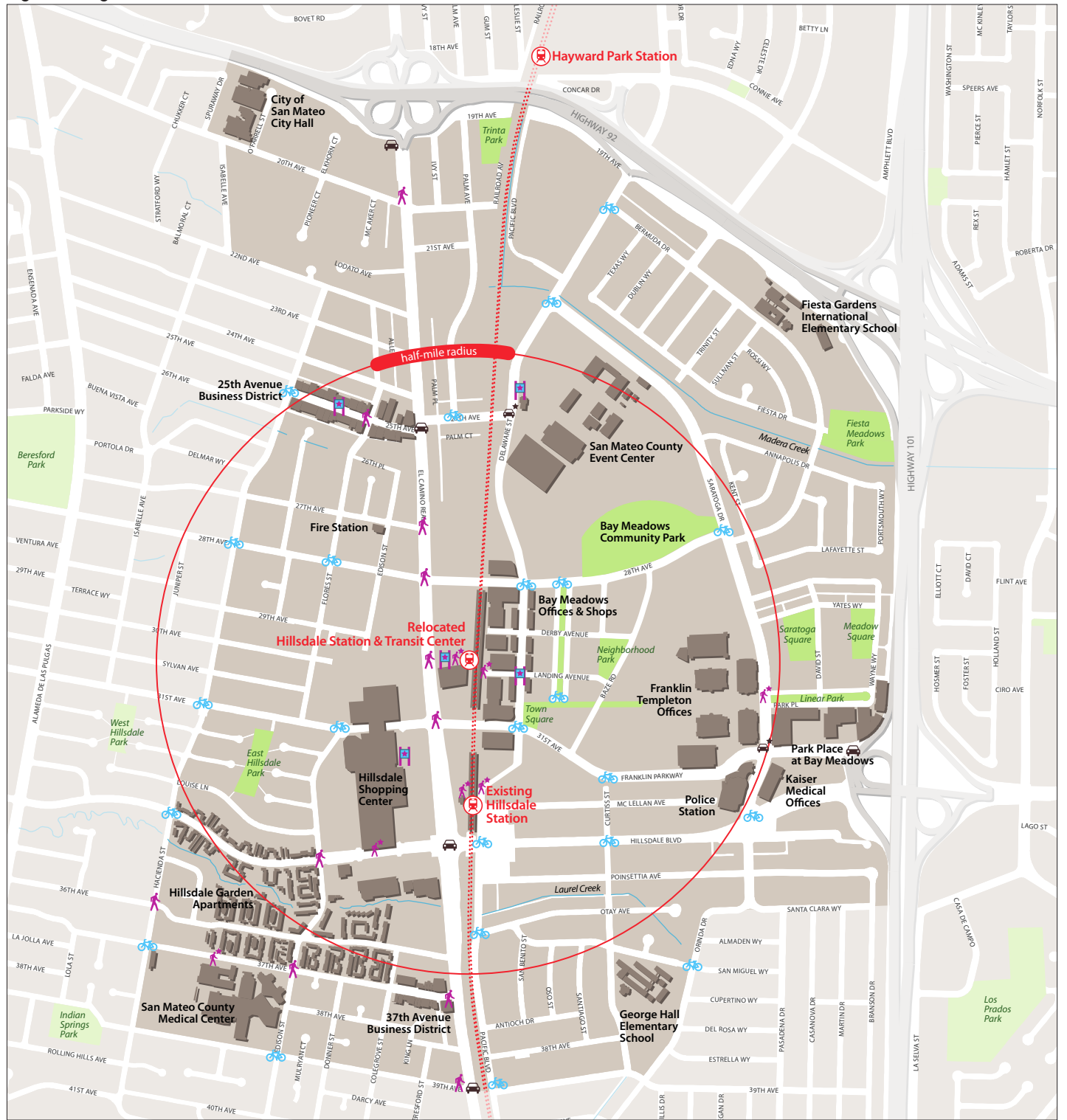
Identity kiosks are located at prominent locations at key destinations and are to serve as orientation aids to pedestrians and bicyclists.

## SIGN TYPES

Signs that are categorized as pathfinder or destination signs are further categorized into vehicular-, bicycle-, or pedestrian-level signs to improve wayfinding for all modes of transportation in the Plan Area. The following are the types of signs recommended for the Plan Area:

**Pedestrian Pathfinder Sign.** Directional signage that is oriented primarily to pedestrians, with text and arrows near eye-level. This type of signage should be legible to pedestrians from a short distance.

Figure 3 Sign Locations



0 600 1,200 Feet
   
 Note: Roadway network includes planned extensions of 28th and 31st Avenues



**Pedestrian Destination Directory Sign.** Destination signage that is oriented primarily to pedestrians to both indicate the arrival to a destination as well as providing ancillary directional signage to services within a destination. Intended for regional destinations only, such as the Transit Center, Hillsdale Shopping Center, and the San Mateo County Event Center, these signs direct people to services such as a parking area, taxi queue, or ticket office, once they have arrived at the destination.

**Bicycle Pathfinder Sign.** Directional signage that is oriented primarily to bicyclists, with text and arrows slightly higher than eye-level. This type of signage should be legible to bicyclists from a medium distance.

**Vehicular Pathfinder Sign.** Directional signage that is oriented primarily to drivers, with text and arrows at a height that is comfortable and legible for drivers, without impeding safety. Because most drivers in need of wayfinding help are usually visitors searching for a regional or citywide destination, these signs are generally located along major arterials or freeway exits.

**Vehicular Destination Sign.** Destination signage that is oriented primarily to drivers to indicate the arrival to a destination. Intended for regional destinations only.

**Information Kiosks.** An information kiosk with a “You Are Here” map is proposed at key locations to help viewers identify their location and orientation within the area using a “Your Are Here” icon. A conceptual information kiosk map is shown in Figure 4. Information kiosks are intended at the following destinations: the Transit Center, the Hillsdale Shopping Center, the San Mateo County Event Center, and the 25th Avenue Business District.

## **SIGN PRIORITIZATION**

Sign prioritization is required to avoid sign confusion at locations where more than one type of signage is feasible. Priority is given to signage that is legible to the most modes of transportation, according to the following priority: 1) vehicular signs; 2) bicycle signs; and 3) pedestrian signs. For example, there is a bicycle facility, a likely pedestrian route to a key destination, and a decision point at the intersection of Saratoga Drive and Delaware Street. Only bicycle signs are recommended here because it is helpful to both bicyclists and pedestrians, while it does not clutter the intersection with too many signs.

Figure 4 Conceptual “You Are Here” Map



Note: Roadway network includes planned extensions of 28th and 31st Avenues

At places where vehicle signs are given priority, it will be helpful to include smaller, pedestrian-level information panels that include finer-grain wayfinding information.

## CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVES

The following conceptual wayfinding program is intended to provide a general sense of the aesthetics and organization outlined in this Plan. The concept takes a streamlined approach to wayfinding, utilizing a contemporary font and color scheme to focus on legibility.

### SUGGESTED SYMBOLS



Caltrain Symbol 1



Caltrain Symbol 2



Caltrain Symbol 3



Bus



Taxi



Shuttle



Kiss'n'Ride



Shopping



Dining



Parking



Medical



Library



School



Police Station



Fire Station



City Hall



San Mateo County  
Event Center



## FONT AND COLOR SCHEME

Trebuchet MS  
**Trebuchet MS Bold**

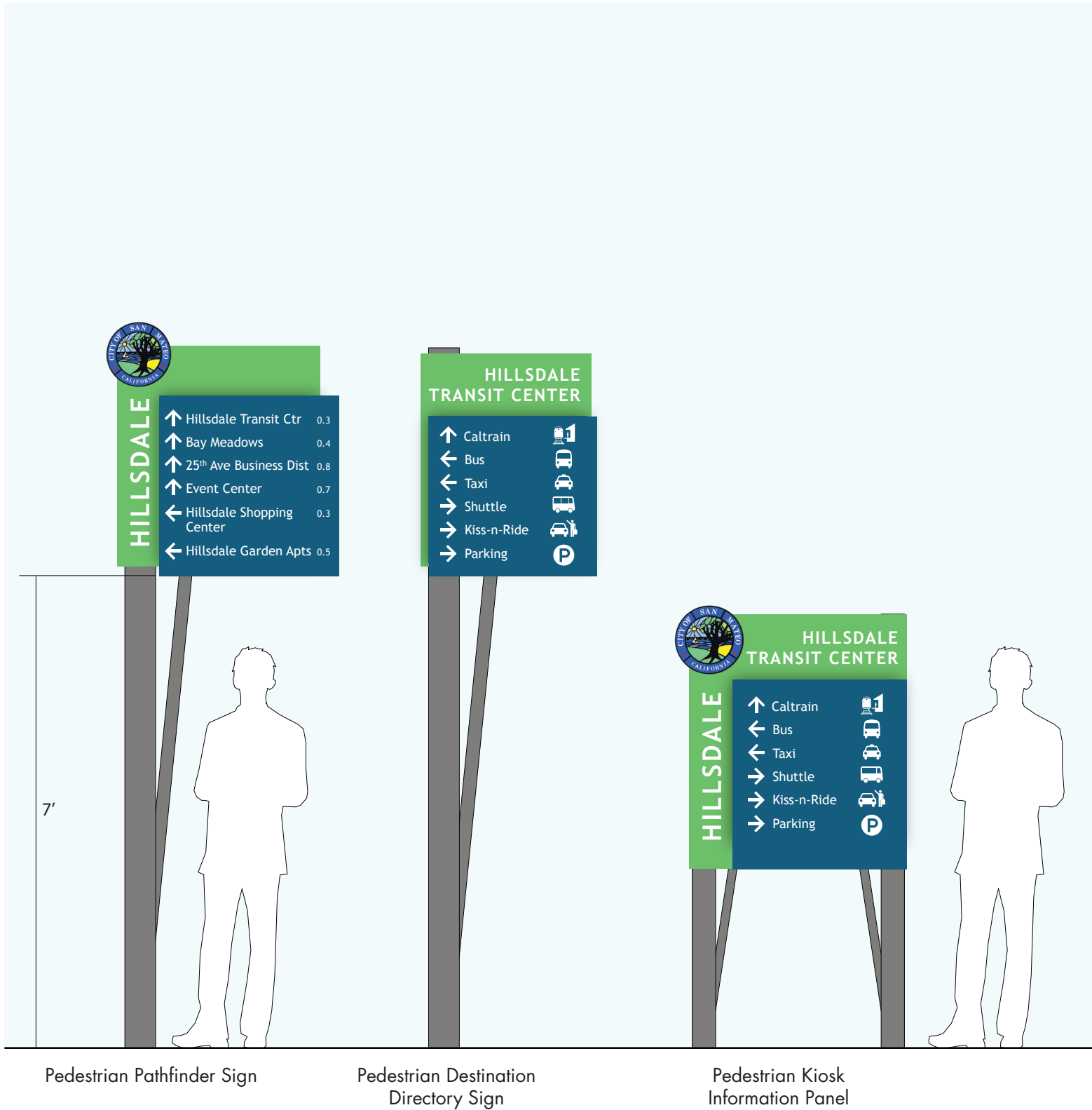


Primary Color  
RGB: 18, 93, 126



Secondary/Accent Color  
RGB: 110, 192, 106

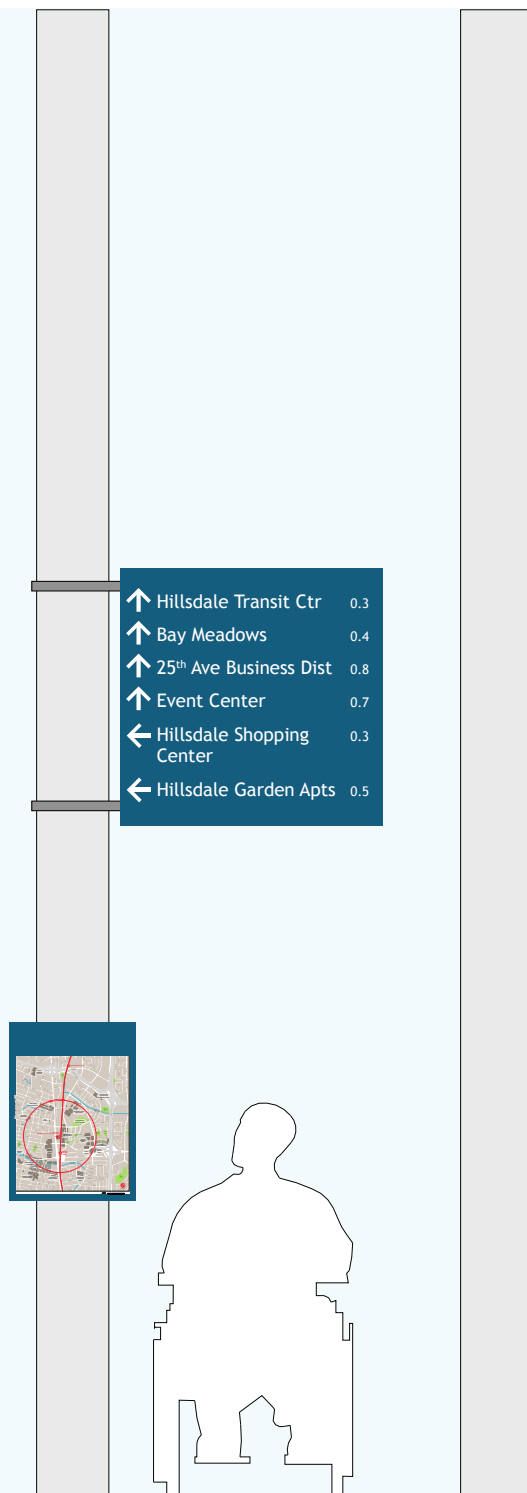
Colors and font are conceptual. Final colors and font to be reviewed and approved by city of san mateo.







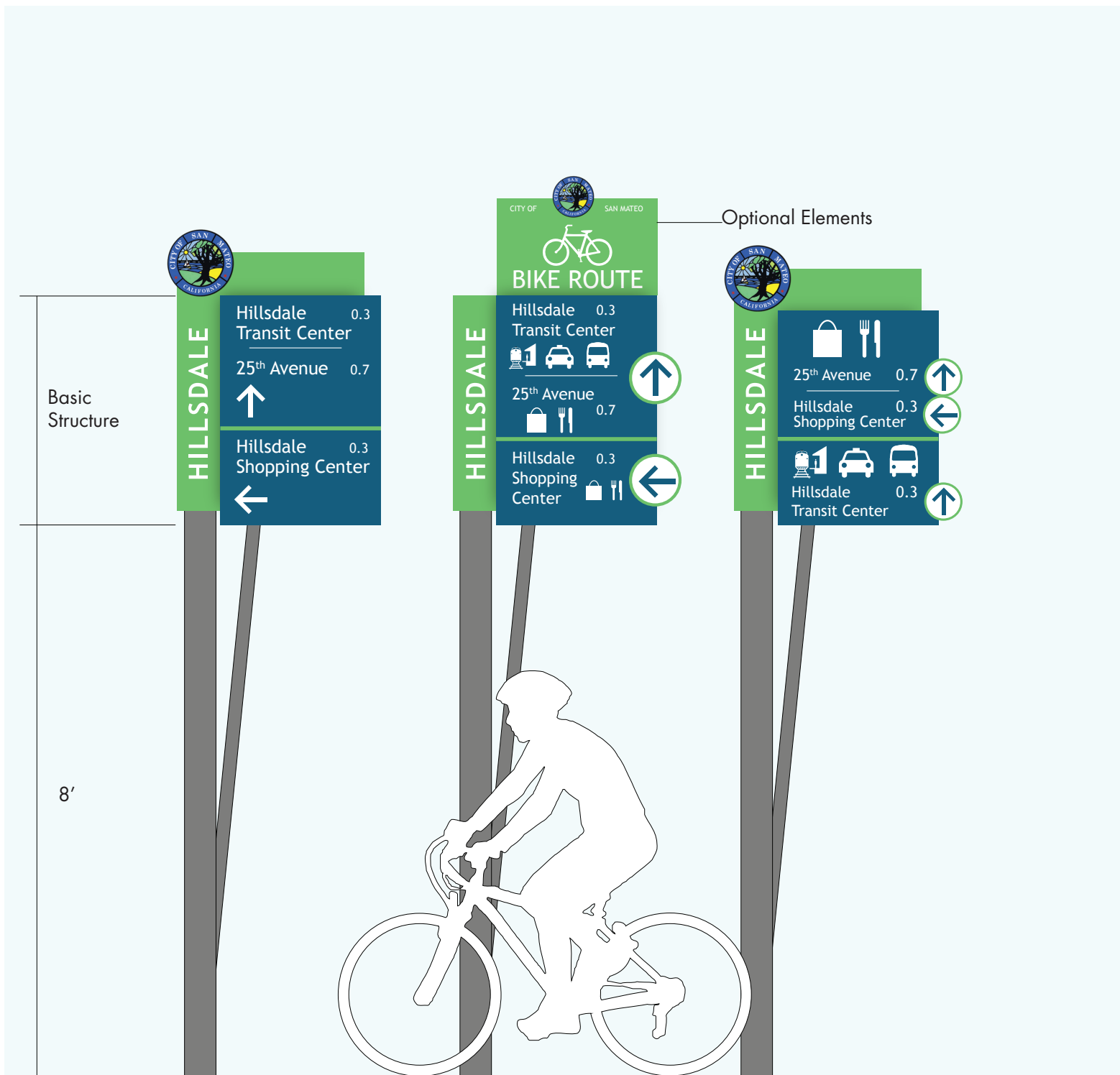
Pedestrian Kiosk  
Map Panel



Pedestrian Pathfinder Sign  
and Informational Panel  
on Existing Pole

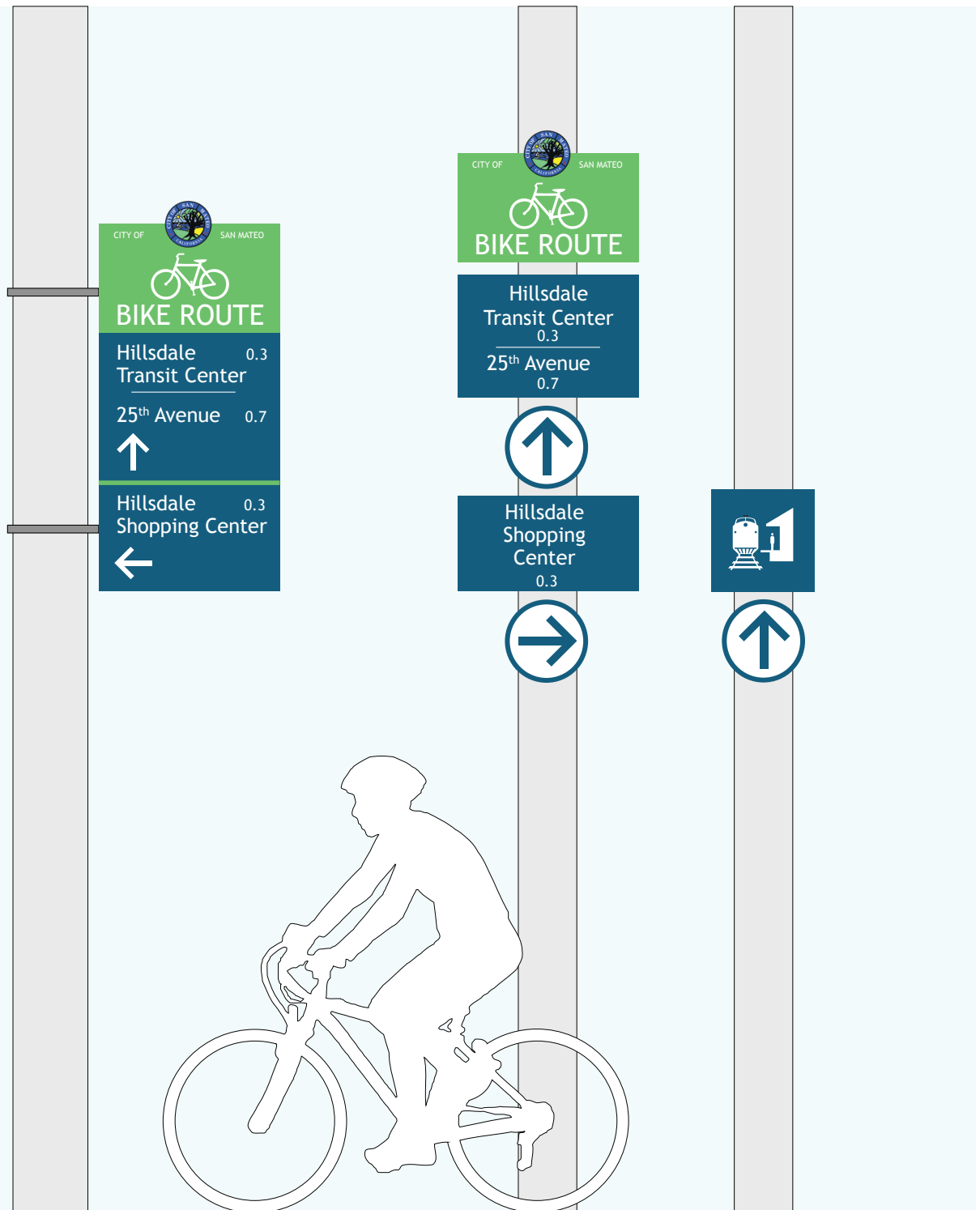
- ↑ Hillsdale Transit Ctr 0.3
- ↑ Bay Meadows 0.4
- ↑ 25<sup>th</sup> Ave Business Dist 0.8
- ↑ Event Center 0.7
- ← Hillsdale Shopping Center 0.3
- ← Hillsdale Garden Apts 0.5

## PEDESTRIAN SIGNAGE



Bicycle Pathfinder Sign

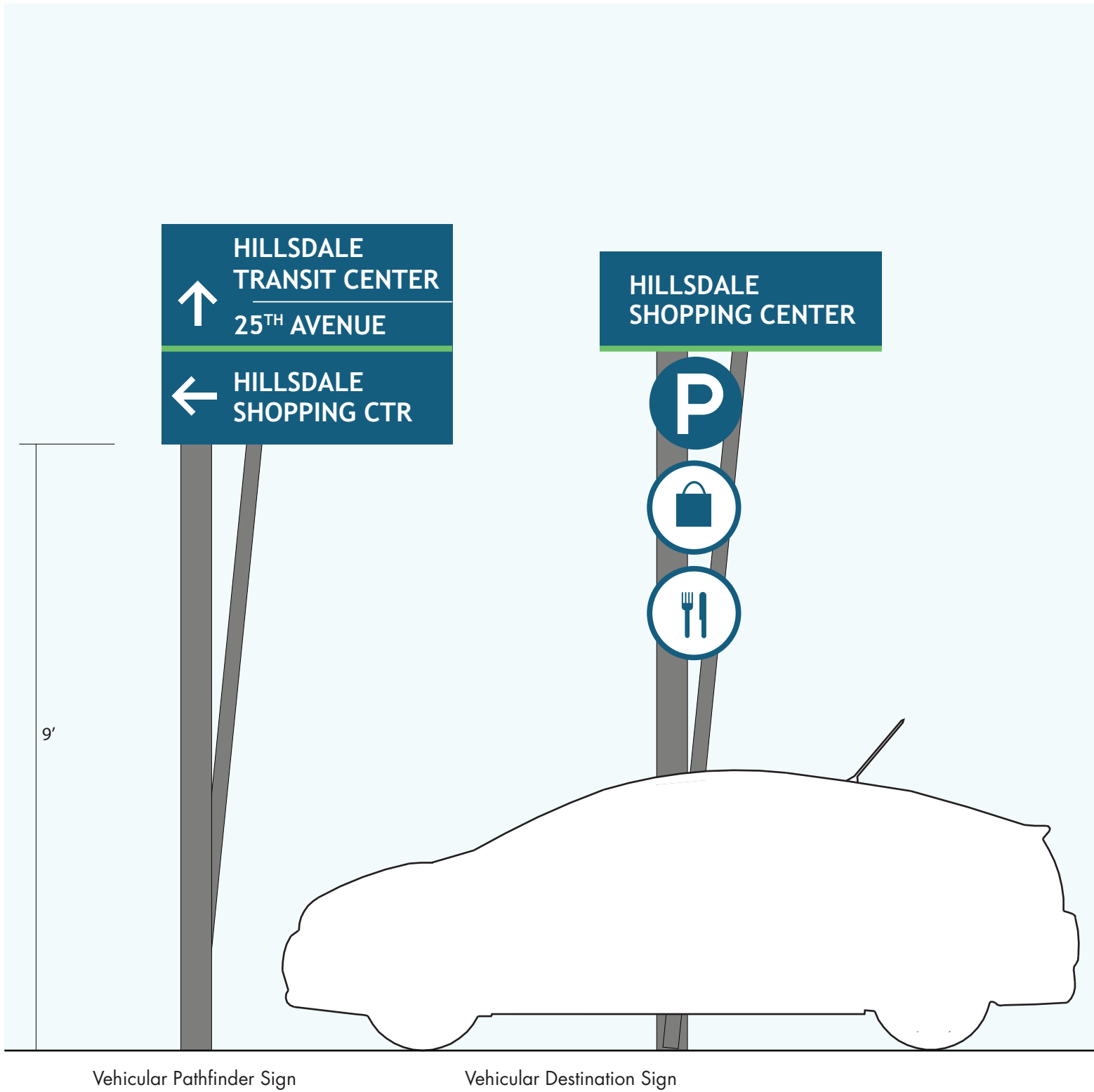
Bicycle Pathfinder Sign  
with Graphical Emphasis

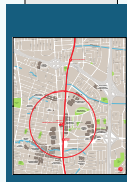


Bicycle Pathfinder Sign  
on Existing Pole

Freestanding  
Bicycle Pathfinder Signs  
on Existing Pole

## BICYCLE SIGNAGE





Vehicular Pathfinder Sign  
on Existing Pole  
with Informational Panel

## VEHICULAR SIGNAGE



# SIGNAGE SIZE AND PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

This section provides the general guidelines for size and placement of signs, sign content, and destination nomenclature. While these guidelines are intended for signs in the public right-of-way of the Plan Area, private developments are encouraged to follow these guidelines to create a cohesive system of wayfinding signage that is easily recognizable to the traveler. The conceptual design, look, and feel of wayfinding signage in the Plan Area is presented in the Conceptual Signage Design section.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Signs should not impede the flow and safety of pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicular traffic through visual distraction or by physically obstructing pathways.
- Signs should be mounted on existing poles and structures as much as possible to avoid overpopulating of poles and overlapping signage, which cause confusion and create an unpleasant environment.
- The color scheme of signs should be designed to be as legible as possible. Signs should contain one primary background color that contrasts well with text color, and contain up to one accent color.
- Signs should not conflict with regulatory signs in color, shape, size, or location.
- Signs should be rectangular.
- Icons should be used where appropriate to aid in destination recognition.
- The base of pedestrian signage should be at least 7 feet from the ground.
- The base of bicycle signage should be at least 8 feet from the ground.
- The base of vehicular signage should be at least 9 feet from the ground.

## SIGN CONTENT

- Pedestrian and bicycle signs should include distance markers, where appropriate, designated by miles.
- Signs should use the following proper nomenclature of destinations in the Plan Area:

HILLSDALE TRANSIT CENTER  
HILLSDALE CALTRAIN STATION  
HILLSDALE SHOPPING CENTER  
25TH AVENUE BUSINESS DISTRICT  
37TH AVENUE BUSINESS DISTRICT  
BAY MEADOWS  
PARK PLACE AT BAY MEADOWS  
CITY HALL  
SAN MATEO COUNTY EVENT CENTER  
GEORGE HALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
FIESTA GARDENS INTERNATIONAL ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL  
HILLSDALE GARDEN APARTMENTS  
SAN MATEO COUNTY MEDICAL CENTER  
KAISER MEDICAL OFFICES  
COMMUNITY PARK

- Where necessary, common words may be abbreviated to accommodate proper sign width. Proper names should never be abbreviated.
- Each Pathfinder sign in the Plan Area should include direction to the Transit Center.

# DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

While wayfinding plays a large role in the integration of the Transit Center into the Plan Area, the physical relationship of the multimodal center and station platform to adjacent buildings also plays a key role in fostering a positive environment for pedestrians. As outlined in the Station Area Plan, the Transit Center is currently expected to include Caltrain platforms spanning more than half the distance from 31st to 28th Avenue along the Caltrain right-of-way. The Hillsdale Station is very unique in that the station is located mid-block, with surrounding development abutting the platform. This provides a unique opportunity to provide direct access from the rear of these sites to the platform, where appropriate. Future development in the Plan Area that is adjacent to the Transit Center or train platform, are encouraged to adhere to the following guidelines as part of the Site Plan and Architectural Review process.

**Make pedestrians a priority near the station.** Pedestrian and bicycles circulating to and from the Hillsdale Station should feel that they have priority over other uses such as servicing or parking. New development should follow these guidelines:

- Avoid service and fire lanes adjacent to the train tracks and platforms.
- Separate parking lots from pedestrian priority routes through building placement. Where auto oriented uses are unavoidable, buffer with landscaping.
- Avoid long stretches of blank walls that could be conducive to an unpleasant and unsafe environment. Consider active ground-floor building frontages with transparency to uses inside when designing buildings that face the train tracks and/or Transit Center.

**Design for safety.** New development should incorporate the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, or CPTED, a philosophy which holds that the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction of the perception and incidence of crime. To incorporate CPTED, four key strategies should be followed:

- Natural Surveillance: Maximize visibility towards all parts of a site. Do not design hidden corners. Trim landscaping to provide visibility. Provide pedestrian scaled lighting.
- Territorial Reinforcement: Clearly define boundaries. Encourage legitimate users of a space to develop a sense of ownership. Provide signage that communicates stewardship of public spaces and spells out rules for its use.

Access Control: Physically guide movement to and from a space by the placement of entrances, exits, fencing, landscape and other barriers. Well-marked pedestrian pathways create a safer path of travel by concentrating the presence of people in those spots. However, new development should not be overzealous and create a “fortress” mentality through the use of unfriendly materials and gates. This can discourage use by legitimate users.

Maintenance: Upkeep is critically important in sending a message that a place is well cared for. New public and private development should work to create the perception of responsibility and caring.

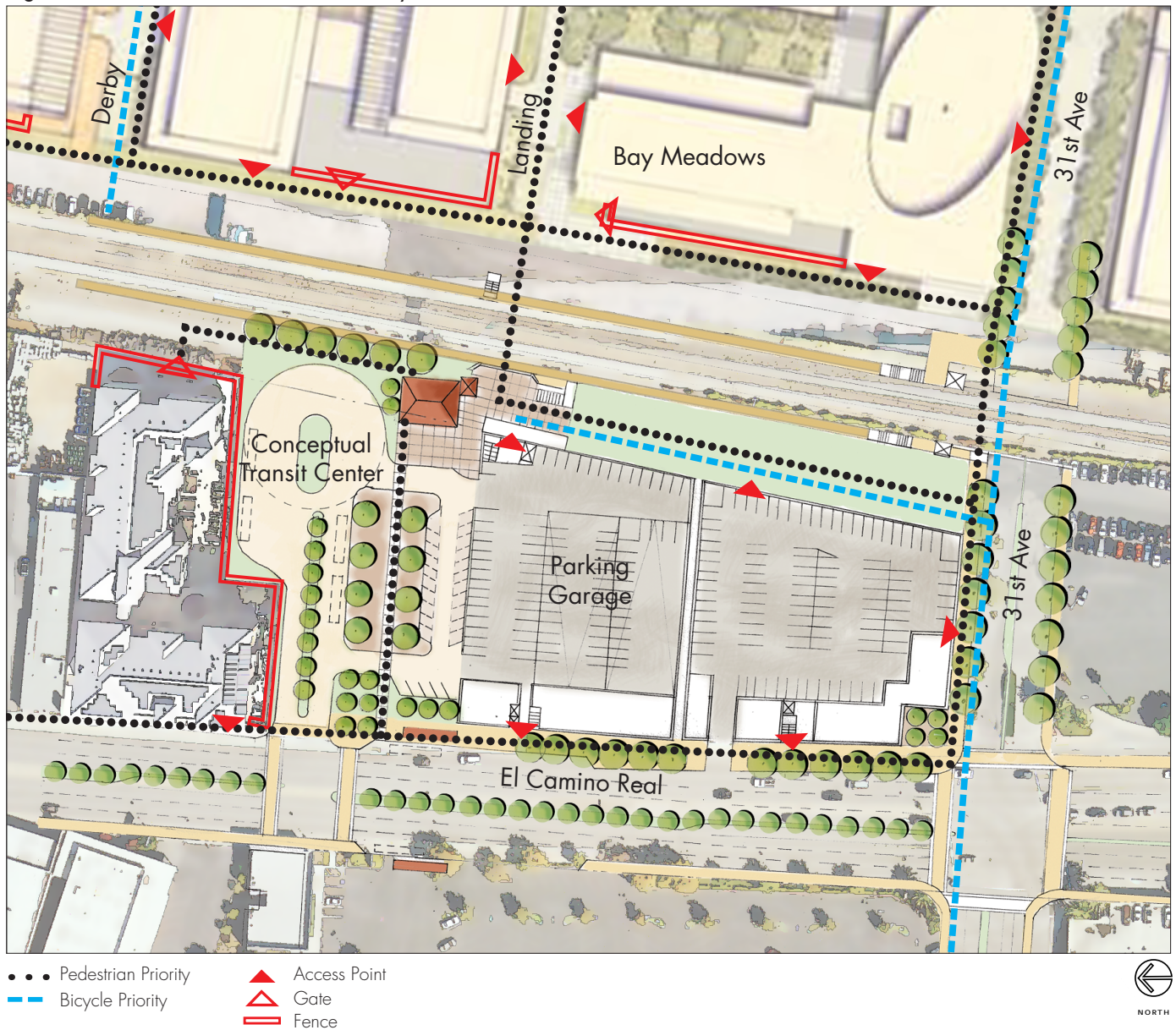
**Provide clear and direct routes to the station.** When new development occurs, emphasis should be placed on convenient and pleasant access to the station. This will encourage use of the train by employees and residents. New development should endeavor to do the following:

- Provide secondary entrances to buildings that face onto the train tracks, pedestrian routes and/or Transit Center.
- Consider stairways and/or pedestrian walkways that directly connect to the Transit Center, in consultation with Caltrain, where appropriate.
- Fences are necessary for controlling pedestrian traffic to neighboring uses. However, well placed, attractively designed gates will encourage use of the train by residents and employees. Gates should face priority pedestrian routes as shown in Figure 5: Transit center Pedestrian Priority.
- Consider providing interior signage directing building tenants and visitors to the Transit Center, consistent with the Signage Guidelines in this Plan.

## INTERIM SIGNAGE LOCATION

The conceptual signage locations recommended in this Plan are based on the relocation of the Caltrain Station and the extension of 28th and 31st Avenues, improvements that could occur in the next 15 to 20 years. In the short-term, wayfinding signage will need to direct people between key destinations in the Plan Area and the existing Hillsdale Caltrain Station, located at the intersection of Hillsdale Boulevard and El Camino Real. Figure 6: Interim Signage Locations indicates recommended signage locations for the period prior to the Hillsdale Station relocation. Because the new and existing stations are relatively close together in comparison to the destinations in the Plan Area, and would likely have similar routes and bus stops, most of the signage locations are identical to the long-term signage locations. The figure indicates where interim

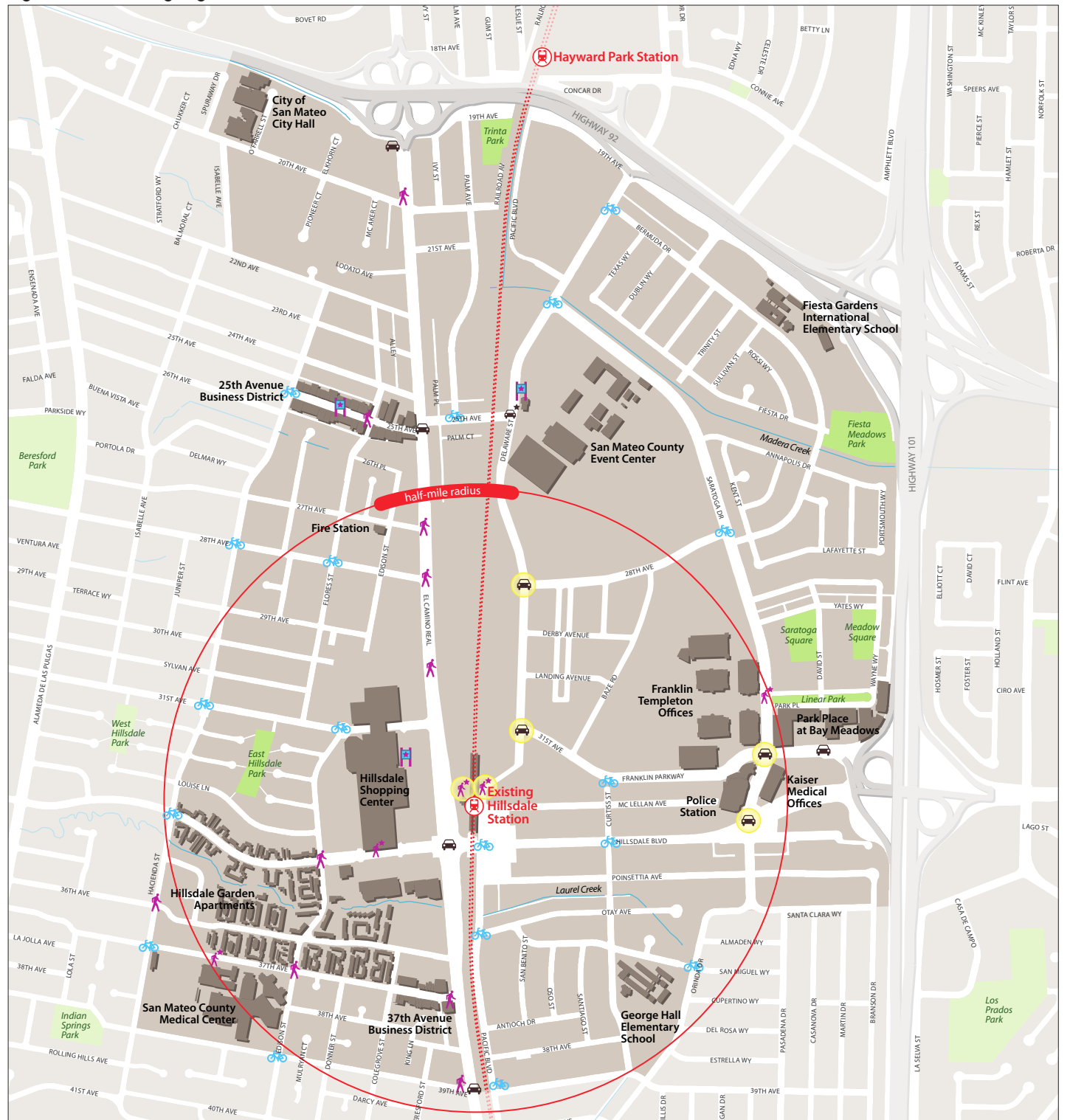
Figure 5 Transit Center Pedestrian Priority



signage differs from the long-term signage, including at both sides of the existing platforms, and along Saratoga Drive as it intersects 31st Avenue and Hillsdale Boulevard.



Figure 6 Interim Signage Locations



- Destination
- Kiosk
- Pedestrian Pathfinder Sign
- Pedestrian Destination Directory Sign
- Bicycle Pathfinder Sign
- Vehicle Pathfinder Sign
- Vehicle Destination Sign
- Interim signage only - will be removed or replaced after station relocation

