

# FORT BRAGG WAYFINDING PLAN

Finding your way around Fort Bragg.....



Glass Beach



Guest House



Coastal Trail



Noyo Harbor



Old Town



Trestle Bridge



Skate Park



Town Hall



Skunk Train



*April, 2015*

Prepared by Marie Jones

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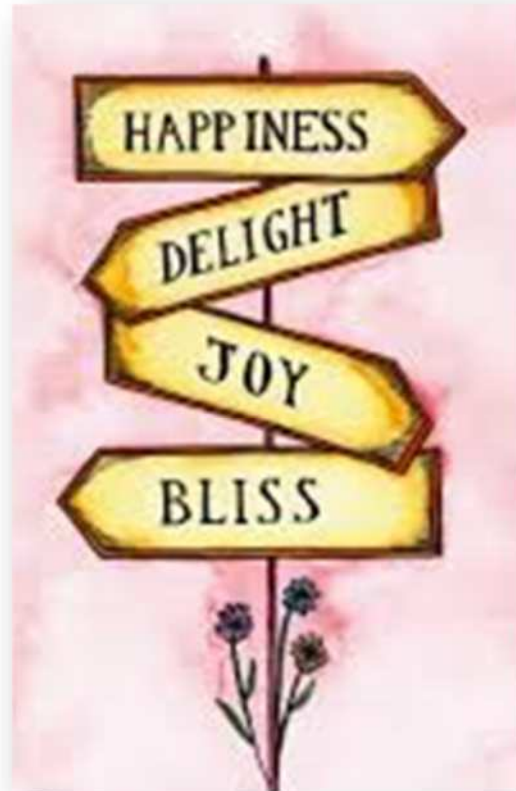
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## 2. INTRODUCTION

### WAYFINDING DEFINED

Navigation from place to place is a fundamental human activity and an integral part of our everyday life. Where are you and where are you going? These are fundamental questions that people answer for themselves through their knowledge and experience of an area. However, visitors and newcomers often cannot answer these simple questions. Sometimes they don't know where they are, and they often don't know how to get where they want to go. They may not even know where they want to go. Visitors have no mental map of our community; landmarks that tell us when to turn (at CVS for the theater, at the Company Store to get to downtown, and at the Speedex to go to Glass Beach) are simply not legible to visitors and newcomers. Instead they rely on existing confusing and inconsistent signage along Highway 1 to find their way to important destinations like the Noyo Harbor, Glass Beach, the Central Business District, and the Skunk Train (see Appendix A for a detailed photo montage of our confusing signage).



A wonderfully designed place presents itself to tourists and residents alike with intuitive ease: the museum is on the hill, commerce is on the main street, the civic center is in the center of town. Fort Bragg achieves some of this intuitive legibility along Main Street; however for everything off the beaten path the City needs a wayfinding system. A comprehensive wayfinding system consists of utilizing the City's website, directional signs, street banners, pavement markings, public art and information plaques, and maps and kiosks to help everyone find their way and identify the important parts of town to see and experience.

Since wayfinding isn't just about installing a set of nicely designed signs, it requires an analysis of our community and how we are trying to move people through it, and the development of a strategy to make this small but complex City, simple and understandable to the visitor. The wayfinding

Wayfinding is about striking a balance between intuitive navigation and individual discovery.

program should clarify to people what Fort Bragg is about, how they should move through Fort Bragg and where they can find all the really important stuff. Smart city wayfinding takes into account how people use information, how they travel (by bike, by foot, or by car), and our many differing destinations and, in some cases, the fact that we don't all speak the same language. The system will comprehensively cover our entire city, not just our downtown.

Overt signage is just one component of wayfinding. Wide sidewalks tell pedestrians that they are welcome. Public art draws people down a street. Street lighting indicates where it's safe and even fun to walk at night. Street banners tie together the downtown – and inform passing cars when they've left it. Many of these little nudges speak to us on an almost subconscious level and Fort Bragg has many of the nudges in place. However there are also many opportunities for improvement.

Of course, we must remember that there is also joy in being lost in a town, in stumbling upon a side street, exceptional restaurant or an unexpected park. That allure of wandering through Fort Bragg would be lost if every surface were plastered with directional cues like: hole-in-the-wall bar over here; used bookstore 500 feet this way! Indeed wayfinding is not advertising and cannot be utilized to direct people to specific businesses. Wayfinding is non-commercial signage.

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## ECONOMIC BENEFITS

An effective wayfinding system will reinforce the sense of place and promote Fort Bragg as a place to visit and stay. Wayfinding can increase the length of stay for visitors, because visitors will engage in all our community offers, stay longer and spend more at stores, restaurants and gas stations. In general smaller destinations with fewer activities see the most benefits from a wayfinding system because people can easily identify, find and participate in the fun things to do in the community, which results in increased appreciation of the community and the visit experience, which when relayed to friends, workmates and family may increase visits to Fort Bragg. It also increases the likelihood of the person returning for another visit in the future.

The wayfinding system should be developed **to serve the greatest number of people** trying to find a location.

The wayfinding system should **NOT** serve locations trying to attract people.

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## WAYFINDING THEORY

How do people orientate, navigate and remember their way through the built environment - the physical structure of a city? Why do people recognize or understand one place easier than another? Over time people develop a cognitive (mental) map of a location that includes activities, landmarks, and destinations. This mental map is nothing like a directional map (see illustrations below).

In a person's mental map the urban space is understood in terms of paths, edges, nodes, landmarks, activities, and districts. Residents, and to a lesser degree visitors, use their mental map to navigate our community. This is why many old timers don't know the name of particular streets but they all know where the A&W used to be....and hence where the A&W haul road is located.

Why is this mental map important for wayfinding? Because the fundamental purpose of Wayfinding is to help a visitor create a mental map of Fort Bragg and thereby navigate it to get to the hot spots they might want to visit. A key objective of wayfinding is to help each person form a mental map of our town, so that they can easily find what they are looking for.



Figure 1: Directional Map & Cognitive Map of an Experience

How does wayfinding help visitors create a mental map? By utilizing a variety of wayfinding tools that literally draw a picture of our town in their mind's eye and help them to navigate and discover our community and the surrounding activities and attractions.

## WAYFINDING TOOLS & HIERARCHY

A good **wayfinding system** should include the following tools: pre-visit technology, highway signage, landmarks, pedestrian signage, visitor center, orientation maps, and public art and brochures as illustrated in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2: Wayfinding Tools**

Fort Bragg has many of these components. This plan identifies our system’s strengths and weaknesses and identifies strategies for developing an excellent wayfinding system.

Another way of thinking about wayfinding is through a hierarchy of actions (illustrated below). Wayfinding for a visitor typically starts with a visitor completing research online or hearing about our town from friends or through the news. Once the decision is made to visit, wayfinding includes a family entering our town by car, finding their destination, finding parking, and then walking to a destination/experience and or exploration of an area like the downtown.



Effective wayfinding must address each of these phases.

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## WAYFINDING REGULATION BY CALTRANS

Wayfinding signage on Highway 1 is regulated by the California Manual or Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Wayfinding is defined by the MUTCD-CA in Section 2D.50 as follows:

“Community wayfinding guide signs are part of a coordinated and continuous system of signs that direct tourists and other road users to key civic, cultural, visitor and recreational attractions and other destinations within a city or a localized urbanized or downtown area. Community wayfinding guide signs .... Have a common color and or identification enhancement marker for destinations within an overall....area.”

The MUTCD-CA further notes that an encroachment permit is required for the placement of wayfinding signs within a state highway.

The City consulted with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) regarding this proposed plan. The consultation included: Caltrans’ review of a draft plan; a site visit and review of the plan with Caltrans staff; and submission by Caltrans of a comment letter (see Attachment 1) requesting a few changes to the plan which have been incorporated into this final draft.

### 3. WAYFINDING WORKSHOP & RECOMMENDATIONS

On August 14, 2013 the community was invited to attend a community workshop to inform the Fort Bragg Wayfinding Plan. Two sessions were held at 8:30 and 5:30 to facilitate active participation. A little over 30 people participated in the two workshops, which were designed to maximize participation. Each participant was asked to visit seven stations, which included:

- 1) Existing wayfinding signage - current conditions;
- 2) Major destinations to emphasize with the wayfinding system;
- 3) Wayfinding signage examples from other communities;
- 4) Wayfinding signage color choices and logos;
- 5) Pedestrian kiosks and downtown maps from other communities;
- 6) The Fort Bragg welcome sign; and
- 7) Public art samples from other communities.

At each station, residents and business owners were asked to vote for the images and ideas that they liked the most, provide comments on post it notes, and provide feedback on comment sheets. Feedback from the workshop was very positive, as community members felt that it gave them a real opportunity to think about and look at examples and even to express ideas that they might not feel comfortable expressing in a room full of people.



The results of the workshop were used to inform the design of the City's Wayfinding Plan and are summarized below.

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## EXISTING WAYFINDING SIGNAGE – CURRENT CONDITIONS

Fort Bragg's current signage includes an array of sign types, sizes, colors, mounting techniques and locations that have been installed over the years by various agencies and destinations to address the needs of the time. This free-market signage approach has created visual clutter and may project a disorganized and disorienting City image.

General comments from the workshop regarding the existing conditions of the wayfinding system include:

- Need to indicate activities in the harbor
- Need to adopt a consistent format with varying colors to indicate different destinations
- Need a wayfinding sign for the Guest House Museum
- In the downtown all the signs are for vehicles, we need signage for pedestrians
- City needs wayfinding signs for people once they leave the highway, once someone leaves the highway there is no signage program to actually help them find their destination.
- Welcome sign north of town is not legible
- Need better signage for parking lots
- There are generally too many signs and of too many different types
- Signs are too cluttered in some areas and too small in others
- Can't read the brown and white signs

When signs have different sizes, shapes, colors, placement, and typefaces their overall and individual effectiveness is diminished. There are 65 signs along Main Street that currently provide wayfinding assistance. However the signs do not have a cohesive look, size, font, color, style or location. Fort Bragg's signage suffers from the general deficiencies illustrated in

Figure 3.

Figure 3: Fort Bragg Wayfinding Deficiencies



Copy size is too small or Panel size is too small to be read



Poor graphic layouts reduce legibility



Damaged/disorganized signs create a lack of trust in the quality of the information.



Inconsistent heights/ placement requires user to search for information.



Mix of sign systems & too much information at a single location



Redundant signs for the same location

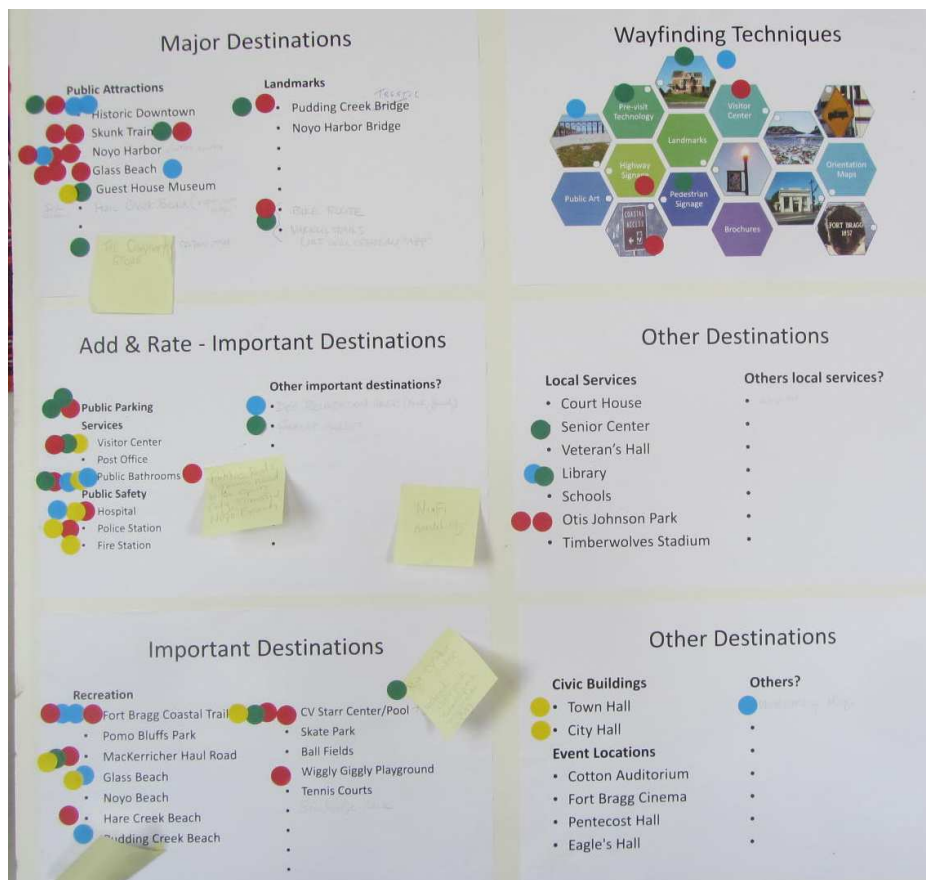
Additionally, as Appendix A illustrates, Fort Bragg has a lot of wayfinding signage, some supplied by Caltrans and specific agencies such as the Police, Hospital and Fire Department and some older wayfinding signage provided by the City. Of the 54 identified existing wayfinding signs, the City will retain 19 signs, the remainder will largely be replaced by 20 strategically placed wayfinding signs, which will greatly reduce the clutter on the street and improve the visitor experience by helping visitors find their way to all of our best destinations as defined in the next section.

## WAYFINDING DESTINATIONS

A good Fort Bragg wayfinding system should link people to the key destination of the community. Workshop participants were asked to select important destinations for the City's wayfinding system. As shown in the poster below there was general consensus about the key wayfinding destinations which include:

1. **Destinations:** Historic Downtown (6), Skunk Train (4), Noyo Harbor (4), Glass Beach (4), Guest House Museum (2), Pudding Creek Trestle (2), Company Store (2), Wordworking school (2), Cotton Auditorium (1)
2. **Recreation:** Fort Bragg Coastal Trail (4), Pomo Bluffs Park (0), CV Starr Center (5), MacKerricher Haul Road (3), Wiggly-Giggly Playground (2), Hare Creek Beach (1), Dog Parks (2), Farmer's Market (2), Otis Johnson Park (2), ball fields (0), tennis courts (0), Noyo Beach (0)
3. **Public Parking:** (3)
4. **Services:** Visitor Center (3), Public restrooms (6), Senior Center (1), Internet Access/ WiFi Hotspots (2)
5. **Civic Buildings:** Library (2), Town Hall (1), Post office (0)
6. **Public Safety:** Hospital (3), Police Station (2), Fire Station (1)

Figure 4: Preferred Wayfinding Destinations



Caltrans allows only three destinations per wayfinding sign (see right). The community's prioritization of destinations was used to determine the number and placement of wayfinding signs for each key destination along Main Street.

### Caltrans Regulations

- 1) Sign Color
  - Preferred: Green
  - Permitted: Black, White, Blue, Brown
  - Forbidden: Red, Orange, Yellow, Purple
- 2) Signs must be Retroreflective
- 3) Commercial logos & messages are not permitted
- 4) Three or fewer destinations per sign
- 5) Signs must be rectangular
- 6) Must use Caltrans' arrow
- 7) Font Size
  - 25+ MPH: uppercase 6" & lowercase 4"
  - <25 MPH uppercase 4" & lowercase 3"

**SIGNAGE EXAMPLES FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES**

In order to gauge community sentiment about wayfinding styles and options, staff prepared a poster board of a wide variety of wayfinding signs from other communities. Workshop participants voted en masse for three general signage types. The historic wrought iron style was appreciated for its overall design and received 15 votes, while the simple blue signage received 11 votes for legibility. Participants also appreciated the incorporation of smartphone technologies into pedestrian wayfinding.

**Figure 5: Preferred Wayfinding Design**



Historic

Blue

Technology

Figure 6: Sample Wayfinding Signs



Participants provided the following contextual comments:

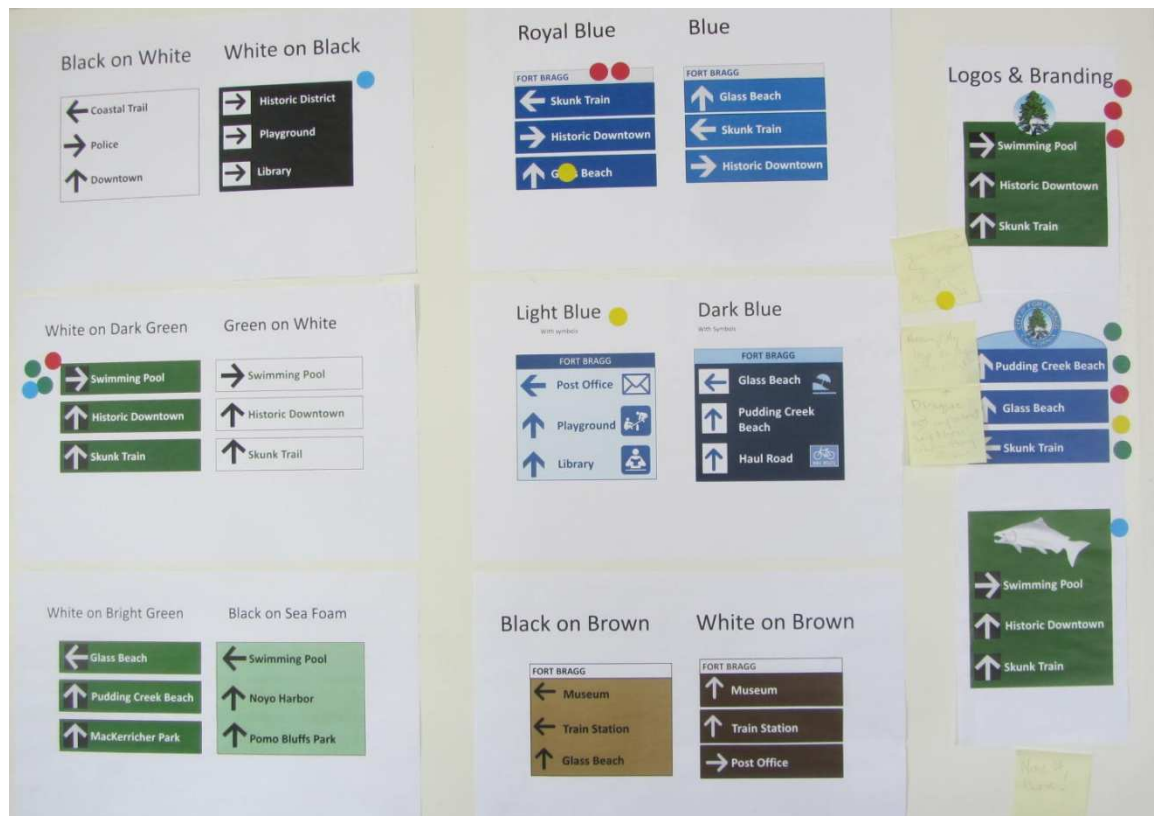
- The selected sign should give the City the flexibility to change destinations as they move and as development expands onto the Mill Site
- Like historic look, but the block letters of the blue pedestrian sign
- Simple and clean are best
- Legibility is most important

This community input about sign design has been incorporated into the signage design for this plan.

## PREFERRED SIGNAGE COLORS

Caltrans limits the colors of wayfinding signage along Route 1. Additionally, different colors may be used for different neighborhoods but not for different activities. In other words we could select one color for downtown, but not a color for recreational activities. Generally in a town the size of Fort Bragg only one color is necessary. As shown in the poster below, workshop participants preferred royal blue (8) and deep green (8) as the signage colors for the City's wayfinding system.

**Figure 7: Wayfinding Sign Color Options**



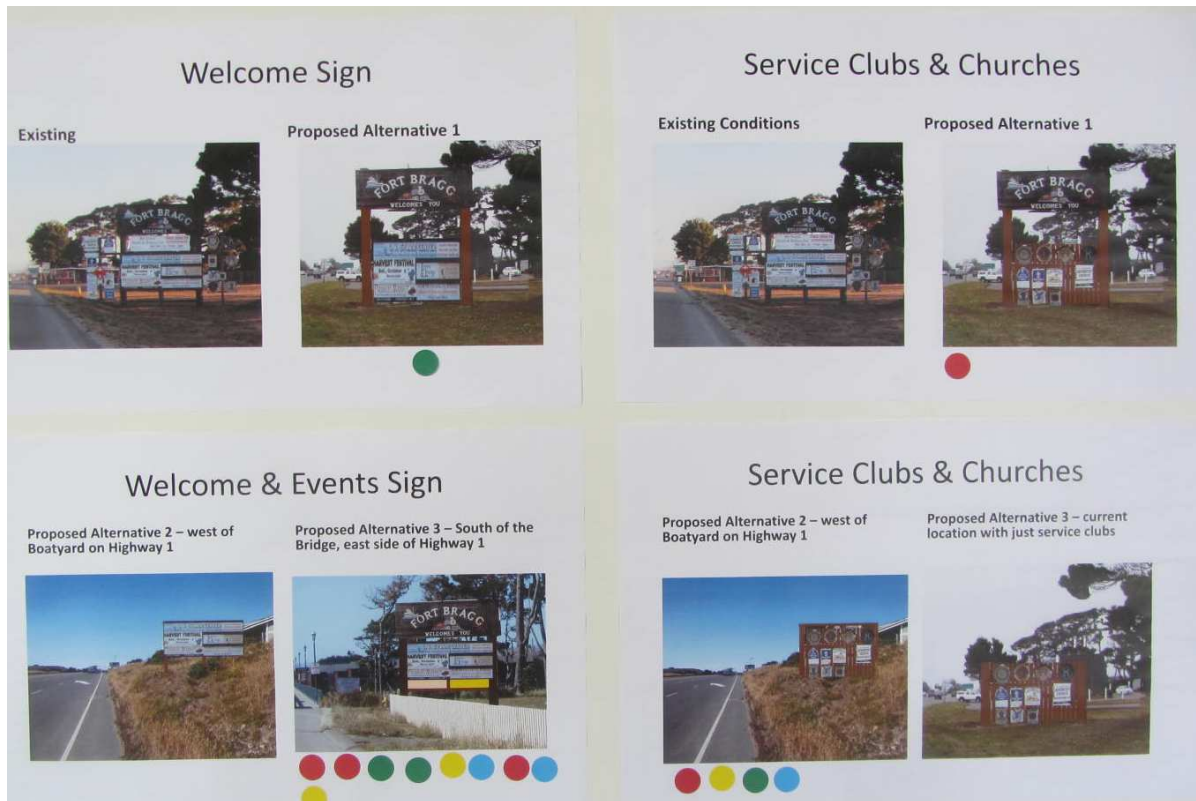
Participants provided the following comments with regard to signage color:

- Blue and white are the most visible and easy to pick out from the other signage
- Keep graphics small and simple, words and arrows are best
- Blue fits in with the beach/ocean theme of the City
- I like blue & white for government function and black & white for historic/visitor
- Like the logo concept but not one of the 3 shown
- If every sign has a logo, signs will be identified as official signs
- Like logo concept but not on every sign
- Consider turquoise – a different dark or strong green
- Arrows to the right of the text is a more natural way to read.
- Blue with white letters are the easiest to read and the best contrast.
- Please use symbols for parking, restrooms, etc.

## WELCOME SIGN

The City Council has discussed the revisions to the Fort Bragg Welcome sign at two City Council meetings. The wayfinding workshop provided an opportunity to obtain additional feedback from community members. The workshop participants overwhelmingly supported the relocation of the welcome and event signage to south of the bridge, and the relocation of the service club/church logos to the east side of the highway between Highway 20 and Boatyard Drive.

Figure 8: Welcome Sign Design Options



Contextual comments from participants included the following:

1. CV Starr sign should not be included in the event signage unless it is to promote an event.
2. Senior Center should be included with service clubs.
3. All the signs are ugly (4 votes).
4. Need a clear sign, should be just the welcome sign.
5. Need to update the image and graphics of the Welcome Sign. It seems dated. It is not who we are today. We need to think “branding” to create a clear consistent recognizable image for Fort Bragg.



## DOWNTOWN MAPS AND KIOSKS

Participants preferred a strong contemporary design for the downtown kiosks. Clean lines, colorful materials, and interesting design were the preference of workshop attendees. Designs with a black background were appreciated.

The City's existing kiosks have a simple traditional look and are considerably less professional looking than those preferred by workshop participants.

Workshop participants offered up a consensus response for the design and style of the Downtown Map. There was a strong preference for a map with each destination identified on the map, rather than through a legend. Additionally, participants responded to graphical depictions of the buildings on the map to help in wayfinding.

Figure 10: Pedestrian Map Options



Fort Bragg Wayfinding Plan - 2015



Figure 9: Pedestrian Kiosks

Comments regarding the map included:

- We need a consistent map for the kiosk, handouts and web-based apps.
- We need a “bigger view” map in the kiosk as well to direct people to the harbor, Pudding Creek, Glass Beach, etc.
- We need a large space for public posting in a single downtown location (like the fence in front of Corners of the Mouth). The current kiosk posting boards are too small and people cover over your posts before your event occurs.
- We need to include historic sites and buildings on the map.
- Color code the map by type of business.

Staff has revised the Downtown Map based on these comments and it has been placed in the kiosks.

## PUBLIC ART

Workshop input regarding public art was ambiguous. There is a wide variety of opinion about what public art best fits Fort Bragg. Generally, Public Art that represents nature or natural forms was preferred by most participants.

Figure 11: Public Art Options



Comments regarding public art were creative and useful and include:

1. Consider interactive public art such as photo ops, climbing structures, etc.
2. Consider context of art, it should be appropriately sized for the location so that it is not dwarfed by its context.
3. Public art that reflects Fort Bragg's history is good. Fort Bragg's redwood section is educational, interesting and attractive.
4. Murals make a boring building more interesting.
5. Consider climate and use of our natural materials that weather well. Ceramic mosaic murals are good and sculptures that reflect the region are great too.
6. Keep historic theme for public art in the downtown.
7. Need a Paul Bunyan Days sculpture.
8. Develop a city-identity art piece– e.g. public art that celebrates whales since we have the Blue Whale Skeleton.

## 4. AUTO-ORIENTED WAYFINDING

### DESTINATIONS

The wayfinding system will emphasize the following Fort Bragg destinations by order of importance:

1. **Major Destinations:** Historic Downtown, Skunk Train, Noyo Harbor, Glass Beach, Coastal Trail, CV Starr Center, MacKerricher Haul Road, Public Restrooms, Public Parking, Visitor Center, Hospital  
*Major destinations will have two to three wayfinding signs (each direction) on Highway 1 directing traffic to these destinations.*

2. **Important Destinations:** Guest House Museum, Pudding Creek Trestle, Company Store, Workworking Program, Wiggly-Giggly Playground, Otis Johnson Park, Farmer's Market, Dog Parks, WiFi Hotspots, Library, Police Station.

*Important destinations will have at least one sign (each direction) on Highway 1 directing vehicles to these locations.*

3. **Minor Destinations:** Cotton Auditorium, Pomo Bluffs Park, Hare Creek Beach, Noyo Beach, Senior Center, Town Hall, Post Office, Fire Station

*Minor destinations will have only one sign (each direction) on Highway 1 directing traffic to these destinations, where feasible. In some cases no sign on highway 1 is feasible due to limitations by Caltrans on number and location of signage. Signage to these locations will be placed on secondary streets (such as Franklin, Oak, and Laurel Streets.)*

### WAYFINDING SIGNAGE SYSTEM

Signage is the most visible element of the wayfinding system. A well designed wayfinding sign program performs a place making role by creating a unique identity or sense of place, thereby effectively creating a brand image in the urban environment. The key objective of wayfinding signage is to help people find their way in as effortless a way as possible. The goals of this wayfinding signage plan are to:

- Coordinate signage into a cohesive comprehensive system
- Reduce sign clutter
- Provide coordinated directional signage to destinations & parking areas

“Signage either adds some degree of quality to the environment in which it finds itself or it takes something away, diminishing the experience by being distracting to the visitor. If a message is there and is unnecessary that’s a serious distraction that should be avoided.... Less is more.” – Chris Calori

Wayfinding signage cannot be used to guide visitors to every destination, as the signage itself can become so busy and distracting that visitors can no longer distinguish the information they seek from the noise of signage. It is entirely possible to put up way too many wayfinding signs resulting in "sign clutter." Effective wayfinding signage should be **intuitive and easy to understand** - a comprehensive, clear and consistent visual communication system with concise messaging is best. Signage should show only what is needed - information relevant to the space, location and/or navigation path. The signage program should also remove excess information - unnecessary elements should be removed to create a clear visual environment.

The following plan follows best practice in wayfinding, by proposing a design that is: 1) consistent in typography, type height, icons, grid design, color and material choice; 2) straight forward in design and part of a consistent ordered wayfinding scheme; 3) always uses the same order of displaying the information.

## GATEWAY SIGNS

The City's current gateway sign is dated, congested, poorly located and difficult to read. City Council has provided direction to City Staff to modify this sign and reconfigure it into two separate signs. Staff worked with Rick Saks to prepare a preliminary design idea which is included below for Council consideration.



Figure 12: New Welcome Sign and Club Symbols

## DRIVE & PARK WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PLAN

There are generally three types of vehicular oriented signage, including Trailblazing Signs, Proximity Signs and Destination Signs. Each is described in detail below.

### Trailblazing Sign

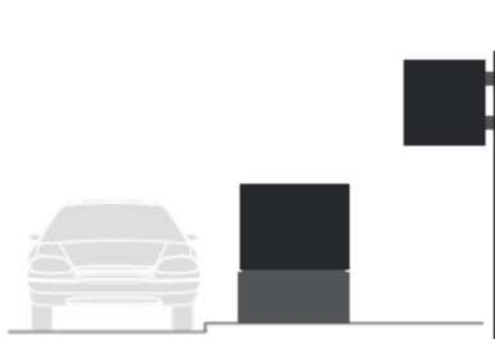
These signs are located along Main Street that guide drivers towards major destinations. This sign type will assure drivers that they still are moving in the right direction and will arrive at their destination shortly.

- Two trailblazing signs will be provided for all major destinations.
- One trailblazing sign will be provided for important destinations
- No trail blazing signs will be provided for minor destinations



### Proximity Sign

These signs, located along side streets (Franklin, Oak, Redwood), will be used to indicate that a destination is approaching soon.



### Destination Sign

Arrival signs mark a destination so that it is visible from a car. The signs usually are part of a development and located on the building so visitors know they have arrived. The City may provide destination signs, where none is available (such as Pudding Creek Beach).

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## SIGN MESSAGE CONTENT AND LAYOUT

The destination messages on a wayfinding sign will be **arranged by arrow direction**. Typically destinations with left hand turns are shown first as they are typically the most difficult to negotiate.

Figure 13: Sign Destination By Arrow Direction



**Wayfinding Arrow.** Caltrans requires the utilization of the Caltrans Arrow on all signage along Highway 1. The directional arrow can be placed on the left or the right of the destination name. If placed on the left, all arrows will align and make for easy legibility. When placed on the right, the location of the destination follows intuitively from the destination name. For Fort Bragg the arrows will be placed to the left of the text for ease of overall legibility.



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## WAYFINDING SIGNAGE SPECIFICATIONS

### Typography

When using an easy-to-read font the typeface is recognizable for many people to read and to understand the message clearly. Therefore the choice of a signage typeface is a key-factor that makes wayfinding work.

1. Title Case, with the first letter of each word capitalized and the remaining letters in small case.
2. Clearview Type will be utilized to provide maximum legibility for all users. This typography was designed specifically for legibility by all drivers (including older drivers and drivers with night vision issues). Specifically Clearview 5-W typeface will be utilized for the project.

3. Clearview 5-W:

**Mariposa Ave.**

Letters will be retroreflective and applied using a reflective material, with vinyl the most commonly used to allow for alterations should the need arise to change the sign message.

**Font Size, Sign Area, Margins**

Caltrans requires that all wayfinding signs be rectangular. The trailblazing signs along Highway 1 can include three destinations (as permitted by Caltrans). Road speed and the number of lanes influence the legibility of wayfinding signage. According to the best research, the signage program should ascribe to the following design specifications.

**Table 1: Sign Size, Height, Font Size and Margins by Road Geometry**

| <b>Road Dimensions</b> | <b>Total Sign Area (SF)</b> | <b>Sign Height</b> | <b>Letter Height</b> | <b>Top Margin</b> | <b>Bottom Margin</b> | <b>Left Margin</b> | <b>Right Margin</b> |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| <30 MPH (2 lanes)      | 18+                         | 15'                | 7"                   | 7"                | 8.5"                 | 7"                 | 7"                  |
| 30-45 MPH (4 lanes)    | 35+                         | 15'                | 10"                  | 10"               | 12"                  | 10"                | 10"                 |
| 45+ MPH (4 lanes)      | 64+                         | 15'                | 13"                  | 13"               | 15.5"                | 13"                | 13"                 |

The signs will be sized so that the sign margins (top, bottom and sides) equal the cap size for the sign. However bottom margins will be 1.2 times the cap size.

The top edge of the sign (not including the logo) should be 14 feet from the ground, with the bottom edge dependent on the number and length of messaging, but no lower than 8 feet.

Signs in the southern part of town will be larger and have larger type, but will have the same overall design as small signs in the Central Business District, where speeds are considerably slower.

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## SIGN DESIGN

Staff prepared three alternative sign designs for consideration. They build upon the recommendations from the workshop and provide Staff with alternatives to present to Caltrans for their consideration. City Council selected Design Option #2 below.



Design Option # 2

Design Option # 1



Design Option #3



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## SIGN PLAN

The proposed automobile-oriented wayfinding signage, including sign organization, location and orientation is included in Figures 14-19 on the succeeding pages, which include an aerial photo for ease of orientation.



**Figure 14: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – Hare Creek to North Harbor Drive**

**Figure 15: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – North Harbor Drive to Maple Street**

**Figure 16: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – Maple Street to Pine Street**

**Figure 17: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – Pine Street to Pudding Creek Rd.**

**Figure 18: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – Pudding Creek Rd. to Virgin Creek**

**Figure 19: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan - Laurel Street & Maple Street**

## THE HARBOR DISTRICT WAYFINDING

The Noyo Harbor is a unique district with waterfront character, defined edges and a variety of ocean related experiences for the visitor. Once in Noyo Harbor, the distinct character can be readily discovered by the visitor. However, harbor access is difficult to find, and the array of opportunities for dining, fishing, water sports, and shopping is not clearly described on any of the Noyo Harbor signage along Main Street. Therefore Noyo Harbor will receive signage treatment as illustrated in Figure 20.



Figure 20: Noyo Harbor Wayfinding Sign

Additionally, Noyo Harbor itself would benefit from a wayfinding program. If the Noyo Harbor is annexed into the City of Fort Bragg, a comprehensive wayfinding and place-making effort should be undertaken to make this a functional district of Fort Bragg, with banners, pedestrian improvements, public art, etc.

## 5. PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED WAYFINDING

### URBAN DESIGN FOR WAYFINDING

Based on wayfinding research, the following strategies have been shown to help pedestrians orient themselves and navigate their ways through a district (such as the Historic Downtown):

- Pedestrian kiosks & orientation maps
- Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage
- Streetscape: paving, lighting, trees, street furniture, banners, mini-parks
- Public art, sculpture, fountains, gateways, murals, interpretive panels, historic plaques

A plan to address each of these elements follows.

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### PEDESTRIAN KIOSKS

Currently the City has four downtown kiosks that provide orientation maps and (three also provide a place to post event flyers). The kiosks are located at the corners of Main and Laurel Street, Laurel and Redwood Ave, Alder and Redwood Street, and at the western terminus of Laurel Street on the Guest House grounds. Three of the kiosks have the same general look and the one on the Guest House grounds has a completely different look. The three downtown kiosk maps are paper based, in closed cabinets, so that the maps can easily be updated as businesses move, close and open within the downtown.

City Council has selected the Kiosk design illustrated in Figure 21. The three sided sign includes: 1) a lockable cabinet so that the orientation map can be changed as needed; 2) a lockable cabinet for an event schedule to replace the event sign at the entrance to town; and 3) a cabinet for flyers that will be controlled by City Staff.

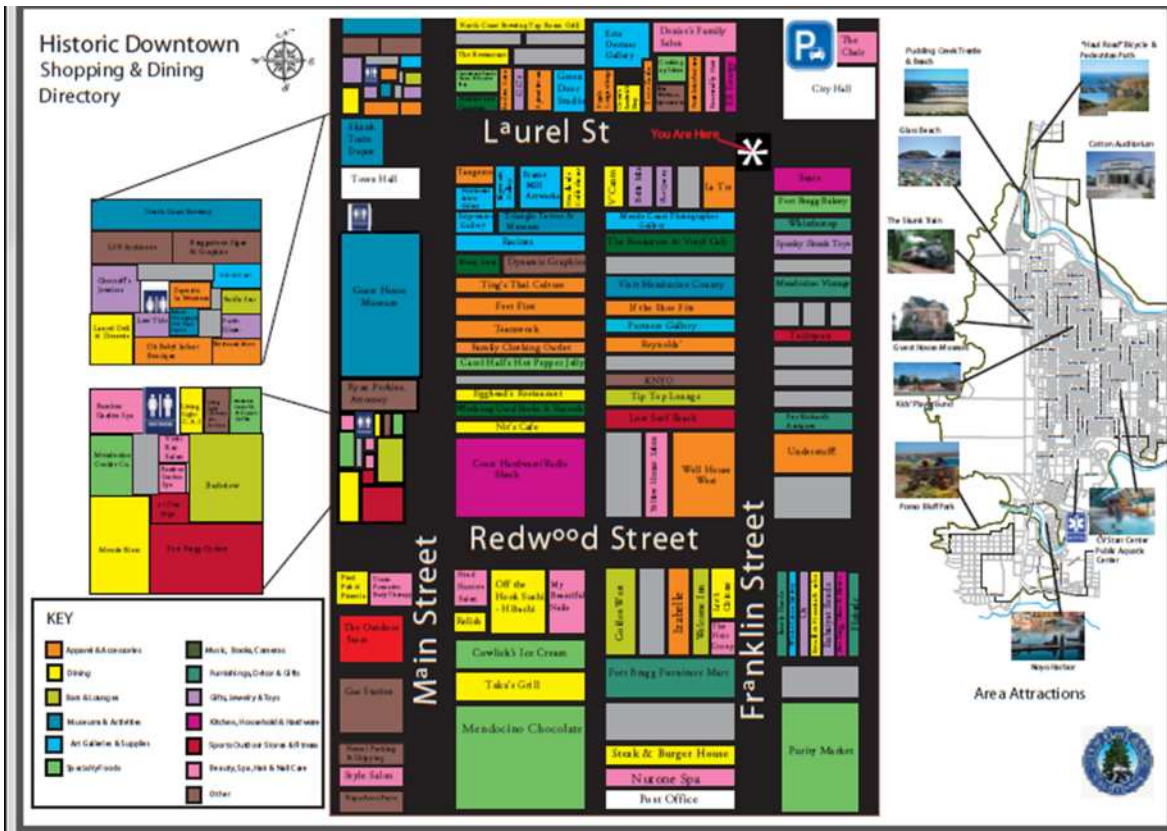


Figure 21: Staff Recommended Kiosk Design



**ORIENTATION MAPS.** The orientation maps were completely redesigned in response to community input from the wayfinding workshop. They also now include a smaller vicinity map that clearly marks the major destinations in Fort Bragg, including Noyo Harbor, Glass Beach, the Guesthouse Museum, the Pudding Creek Trestle and Haul Road, the Fort Bragg Coastal Trail, Point Cabrillo light house, and MacKerricher Park. A copy of the revised downtown directory is shown in Figure 22.

Figure 22: New Downtown Wayfinding Directory



**PEDESTRIAN WAYFINDING SIGNAGE**

Pedestrian wayfinding signage is located on the sidewalk side of street posts, has smaller font and is focused on destinations that can be easily reached by foot (less than half a mile of distance). Pedestrian wayfinding signage should not be retroreflective.

In Downtown Fort Bragg only a few destinations are readily accessible by foot and these include:

- The Skunk Train Depot
- The Guest House Museum
- Farmers Market
- Library



Figure 23: Pedestrian Wayfinding

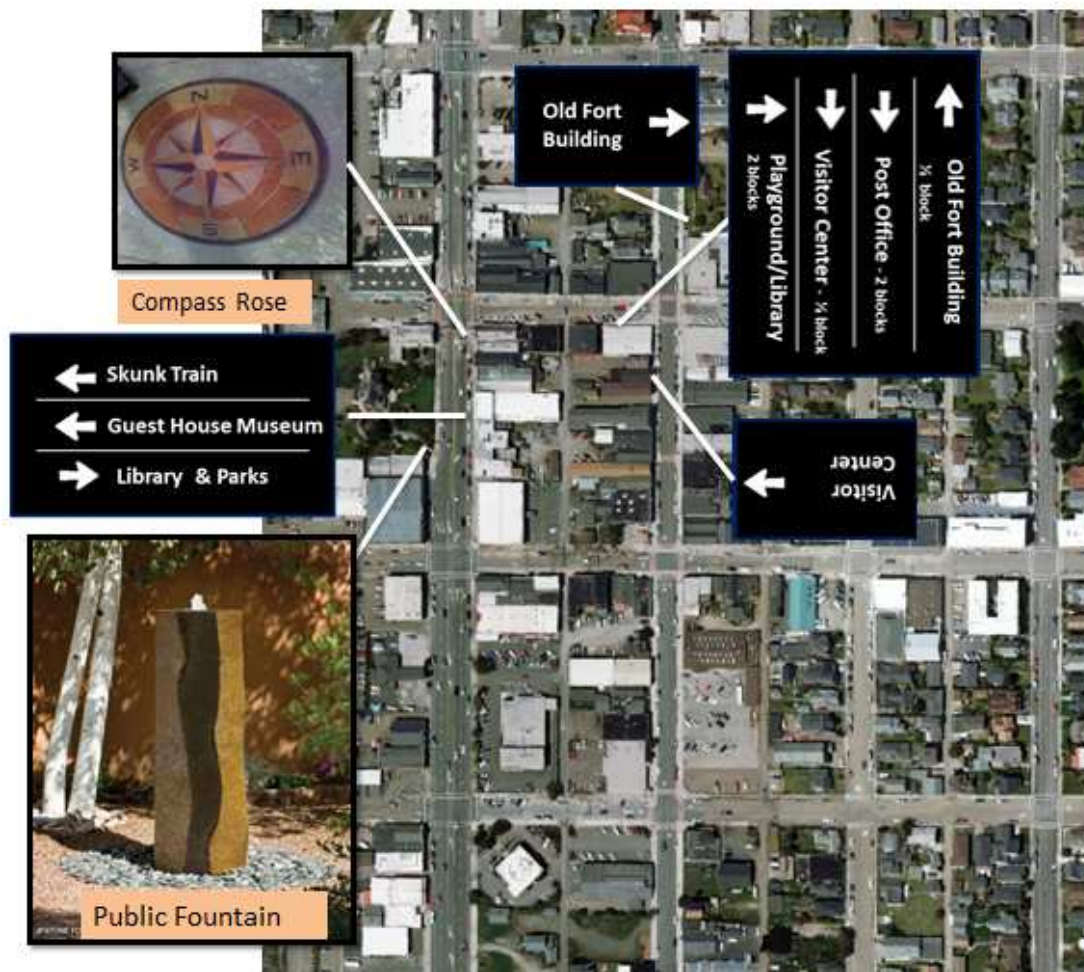
- Post Office
- Town Hall
- Wiggly Giggle Playground
- Otis Johnson Park
- Public Restrooms & Parking.

The preferred signage design from the workshop was a simple wrought iron design of white lettering on a black background as illustrated in **Error! Reference source not found..** Caltrans does not regulate pedestrian wayfinding design. Therefore white on black is an acceptable color for sign design and would fit well with the existing light posts and pole standards in downtown. Please see the figure below for the proposed pedestrian-oriented wayfinding signs in Downtown.



Figure 24: Preferred Pedestrian Design

Figure 24: Downtown Pedestrian Signage Plan



## PUBLIC ART

Fort Bragg has relatively little public art, especially given the number of artists and galleries in our community. Public art can become a destination; it also builds the sense of place and enhances the trip experience. Public art helps people find their way, enjoy their experience and bring home photos that excite others for a visit. The best public art is whimsical, creative, and provides a surprise or “a-ha” experience. Public Art shouldn't be about giving people the ‘known;’ it should be about giving people what they didn't know they wanted in the first place. It should bring surprise, change the way people see or think or experience a space. It is also relevant to the context in which it is viewed. Public art can become a destination in itself as evidenced by the examples of public art below. Chicago is known as Bean Town, and the “bean” is probably the most photographed and visited public art in the country.

Fun public art from other communities



Madison, Wisconsin



Albuquerque, NM



The Bean, “Bean-town” Chicago

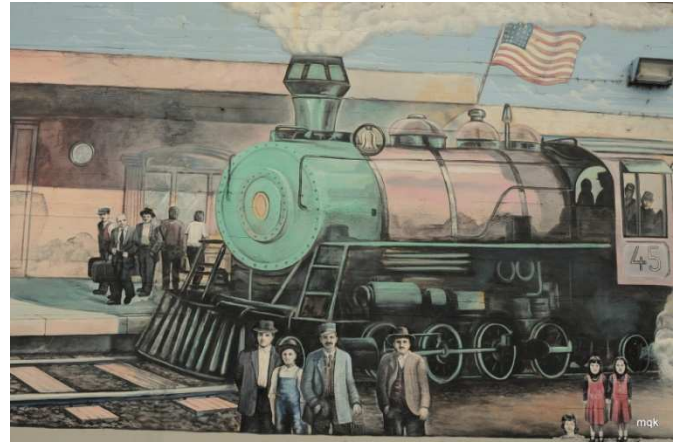


San Francisco

Fort Bragg has relatively limited public art. However, two pieces of public art which are most visible and readily identified in our community, the redwood round and the skunk train mural on Main Street, are definitely place-making public art.



Redwood Round



Skunk Train Mural

Additional iconic place making art would be appropriate for Fort Bragg wayfinding and placemaking. Suitable placemaking concepts for artistic interpretation could include the following: Glass Beach, fisheries and fish, sustainability, the ocean.

Additionally, artistic embellishments that are not art in themselves may also make their way into the pedestrian-oriented wayfinding and placemaking plan. Specifically a compass rose and a fountain are two worthy ideas to improve the sense of place in Fort Bragg.

### **Sidewalk Compass Rose**

Public art can also be located in the sidewalk and can help visitors orient themselves to the fun opportunities in Fort Bragg.

The corner of Laurel and Main Street could include a sidewalk compass rose. The sidewalk compass rose could include major landmarks in its North, South, East and West orientation, namely:

- West – Skunk Train
- North - Glass Beach
- East - Historic Downtown
- South - Noyo Harbor



The sidewalk compass provides people with visual and word cues about the important things to do and see in Fort Bragg.

### **Sidewalk Art - Public Fountain**

City Council and the community have discussed the possibility of placing a fountain on the extended sidewalk in front of the Company Store as part of that streetscape improvement program. Council expressed a desire for a basalt rock fountain as part of the access/landscaping improvements at the Guest House Museum. Some sample designs are included below:



Public art can also be encouraged through the Design Review process for new large discretionary commercial projects along Main Street.

## 6. PRE-VISIT TECHNOLOGY

Many people investigate Fort Bragg prior to their visit through searches on the internet. This is the first opportunity to present the City, the wayfinding system, provide an overview of key destinations, and encourage exploration. Typically visitors look at Google Maps and our tourism websites such as [www.fortbragg.com](http://www.fortbragg.com), [www.gomendo.com](http://www.gomendo.com).



### **www.FortBragg.com**

This website is fresh and provides an excellent overview of what to do in Fort Bragg. However, from a wayfinding perspective the orientation map could be refined to be printable and should include the following missing destinations: Noyo Harbor and the Downtown Business District directory.

### **www.gomendo.com**

This website provides excellent information about the coast. It could be improved through the additional of the interactive map described below. Additionally all activities are organized alphabetically and they might be easier to navigate if they were organized by type of activity: e.g. museums, arts, outdoor adventure, ocean adventure, shopping, historic building, etc.

*Future Strategy: Develop an interactive map for [www.FortBragg.com](http://www.FortBragg.com) that emphasizes wayfinding to provide accessible information about attractions, points of interest, bike and pedestrian paths, historic sites, accommodations, restaurants, and recreational facilities. An interactive map should allow users to locate destinations, see photos and read reviews at the click of a mouse. It is common practice for this map to be built on Google Maps and use the power of the Google search engine as well as the point-to-point directions feature. The look and feel of the interactive map should reflect the overall identity of Fort Bragg. The **Find Fort Bragg Map** should be an integrated part of [fortbragg.com](http://fortbragg.com) and [gomendo.com](http://gomendo.com) websites.*

## 7. COLLATERAL MATERIALS

Collateral Materials should communicate with a “single voice” and identity. Wayfinding collateral materials include orientation maps and brochures.

A number of brochures provide information about Fort Bragg. However these existing brochures provide variable levels of information and give preference to the members or providers of the brochures. For example, the Chamber of Commerce map of the City provides specific information about chamber members, but does not specifically direct people to the activities and places of our community.

*Strategy: The City should prepare a paper-based handheld wayfinding map that represents the range of activities of our community.*



## 8. VISITOR CENTERS

The Chamber of Commerce and Go Mendocino both operate Visitor Centers in Fort Bragg. Both provide a wide array of information about activities in Fort Bragg and the County. These visitor centers are excellent assets for the Fort Bragg hospitality industry and both are located in easy to find and access locations.



Chamber of Commerce



Visit Mendocino County Inc.

## 9. BUDGET

The budget estimate below provides a high and low estimate of costs to implement this plan. As some components of the plan are not yet well defined or designed (such as the fountain and kiosks) a range is provided with a min and max price/unit for each item.

### Fort Bragg Wayfinding Plan: Preliminary Implementation Budget

|  | Number | Min Price/<br>Unit | Max Price/<br>Unit | Low Cost<br>Estimate | High Cost<br>Estimate |
|--|--------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| New Welcome Sign                       | 1      | \$ 10,500          | \$ 18,500          | \$ 10,500            | \$ 18,500             |
| Auto-Oriented Wayfinding Signage       | 29     | \$ 240             | \$ 450             | \$ 6,960             | \$ 13,050             |
| Pedestrian-Oriented Wayfinding Signage | 2      | \$ 450             | \$ 650             | \$ 900               | \$ 1,300              |
| Compass Rose                           | 1      | \$ 800             | \$ 1,500           | \$ 800               | \$ 1,500              |
| Main & Redwood St Fountain             | 1      | \$ 6,000           | \$ 35,000          | \$ 6,000             | \$ 35,000             |
| New Downtown Kiosks                    | 4      | \$ 1,500           | \$ 3,000           | \$ 6,000             | \$ 12,000             |
| Interactive Web-based Wayfinding Map   | 1      | \$ 2,500           | \$ 6,000           | \$ 2,500             | \$ 6,000              |
| Paper Wayfinding Map                   | 1      | \$ 1,000           | \$ 2,000           | \$ 1,500             | \$ 2,000              |
| <b>Total</b>                           |        |                    |                    | <b>\$ 35,160</b>     | <b>\$ 89,350</b>      |

## 10. NEXT STEPS

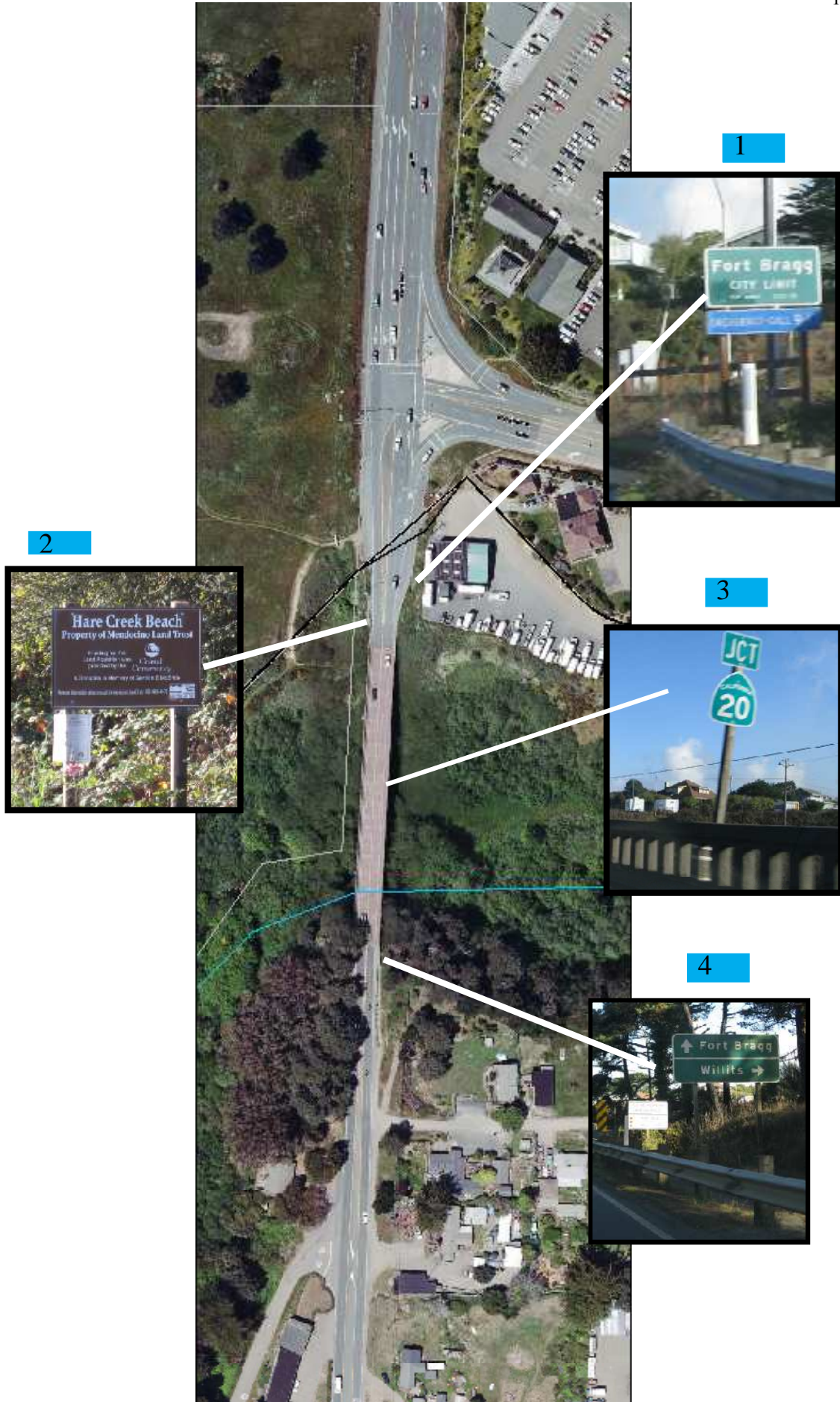
Staff recommends the following next steps for successful implementation of this plan:

1. Obtain final approvals from Caltrans for auto-oriented signage plan.
2. Include the wayfinding project in the capital improvement budget.
3. Designate funding for the project.
4. Prepare samples of the different sign types and place them on the street to ensure they are effective and pleasing.
5. Implement pedestrian and auto-oriented wayfinding signage program.



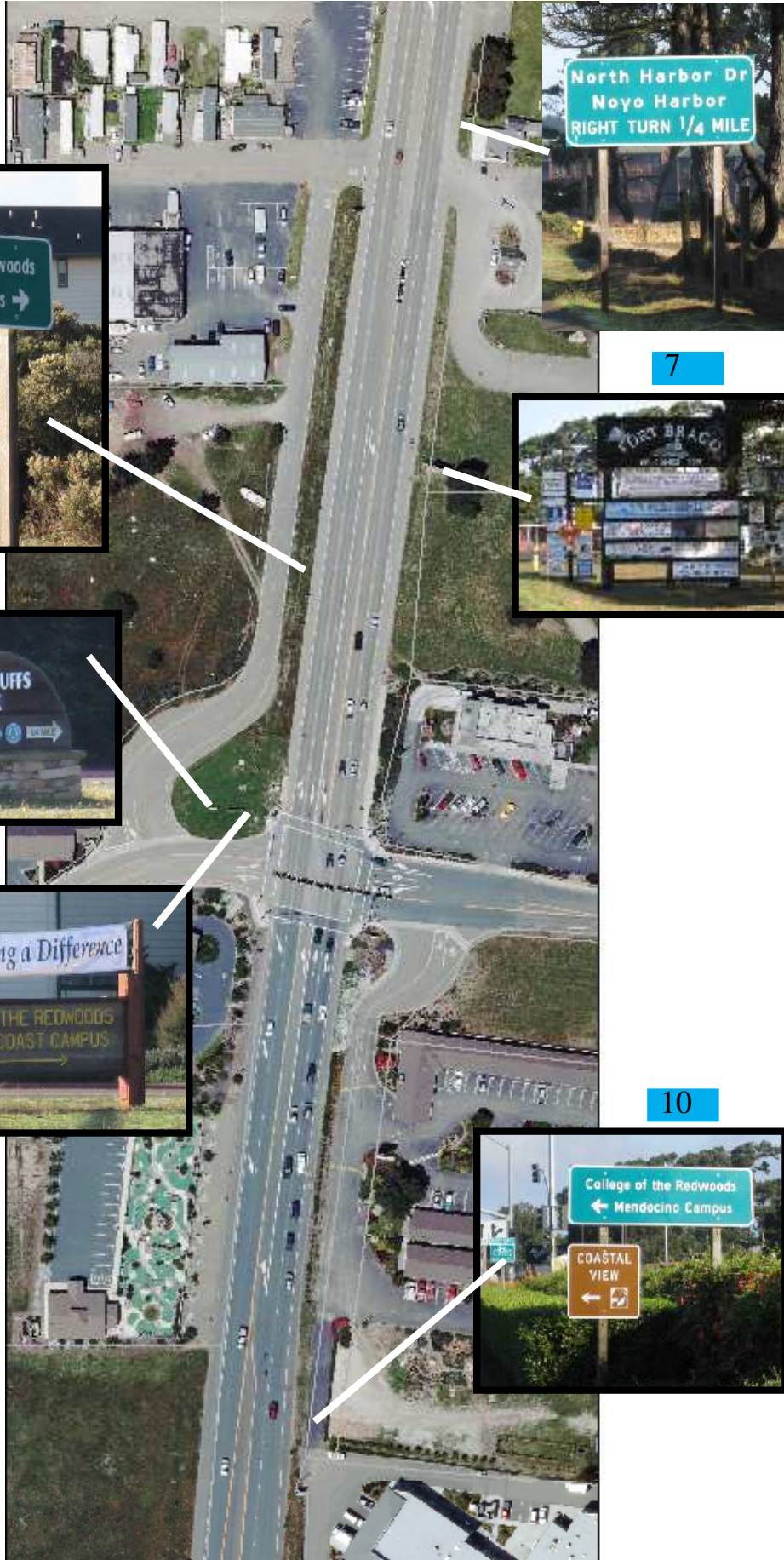
11.APPENDIX A: EXISTING CONDITIONS

# Hare Creek to Highway 20



# Highway 20 to OceanView

5



6



7



8



9



10





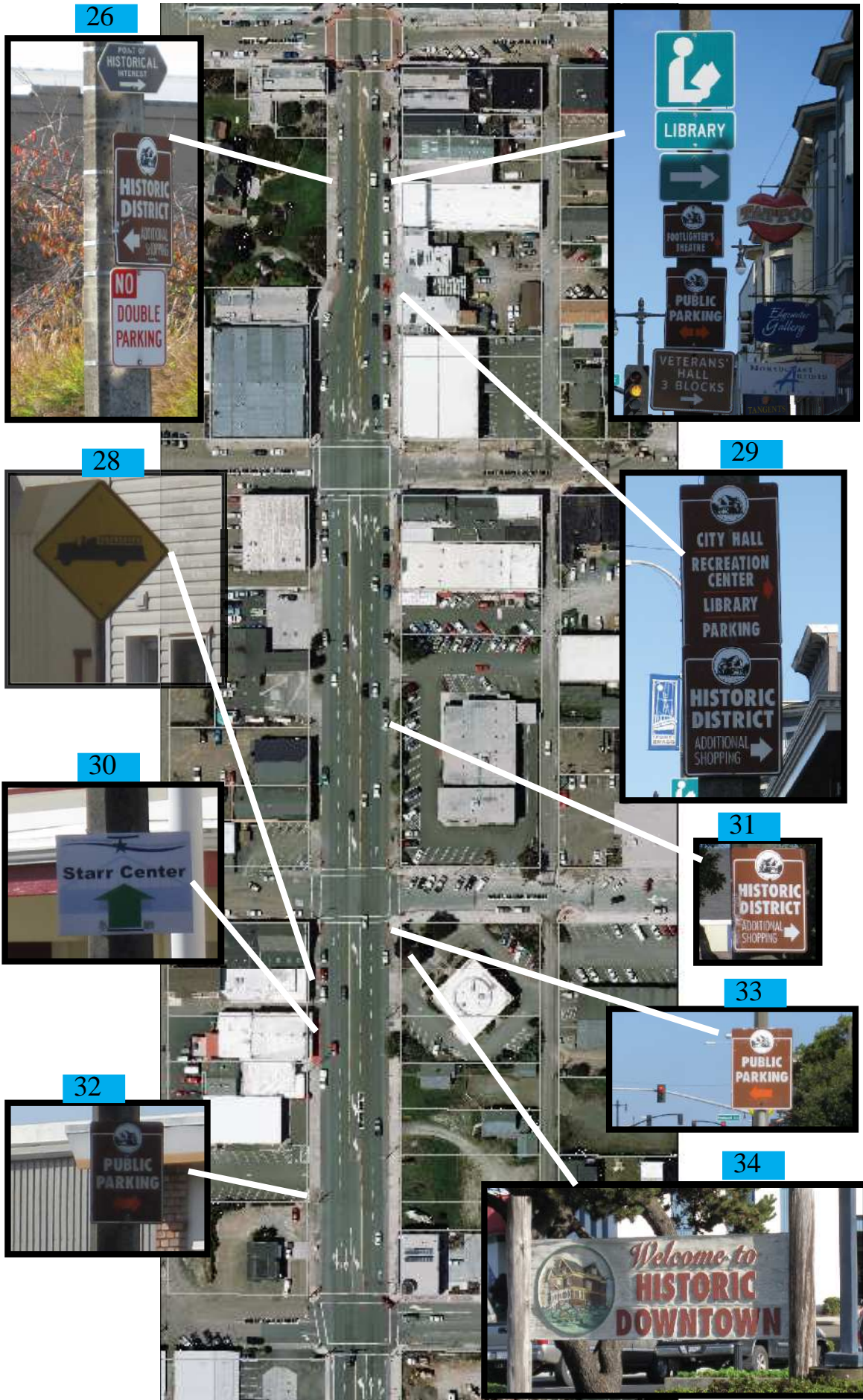


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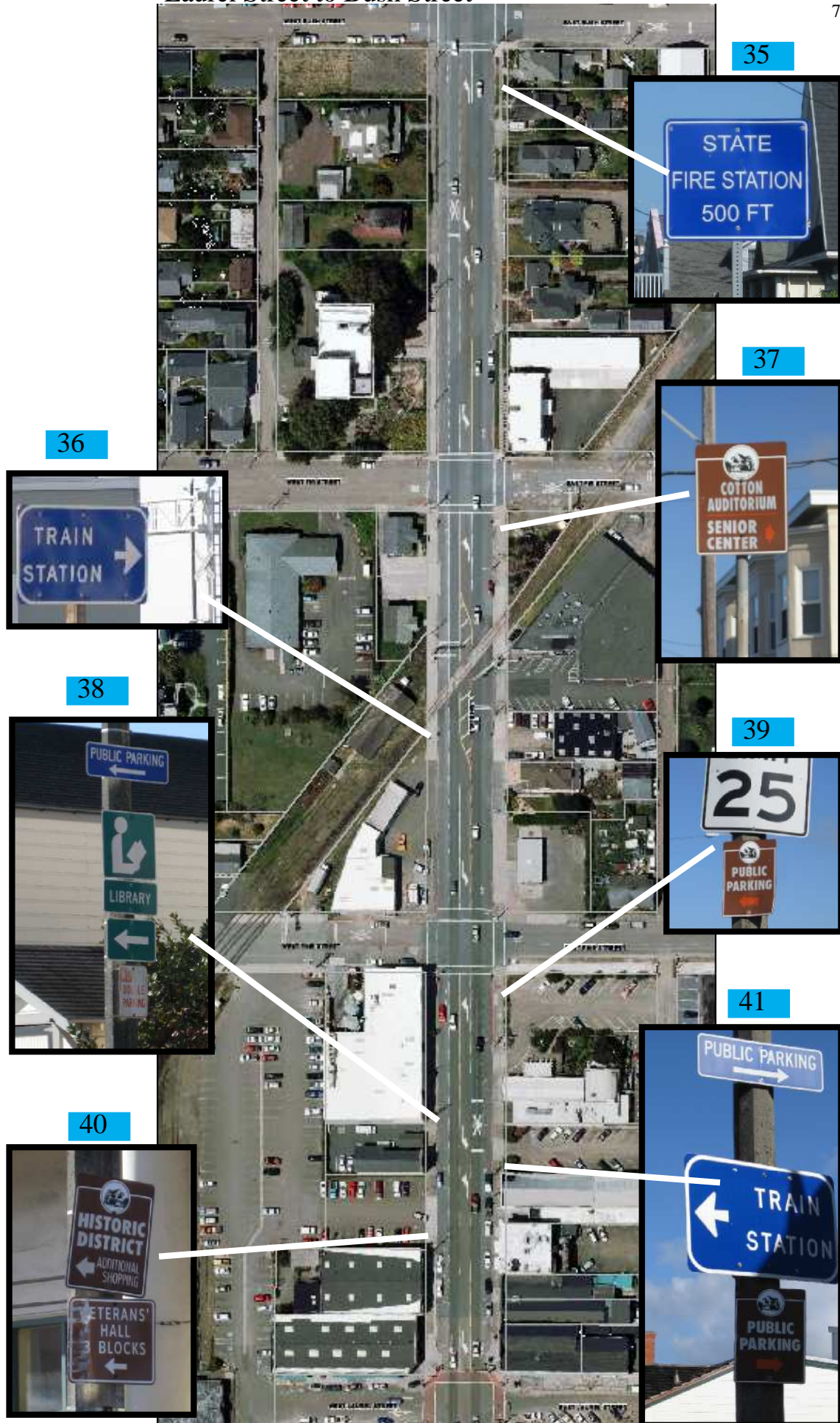




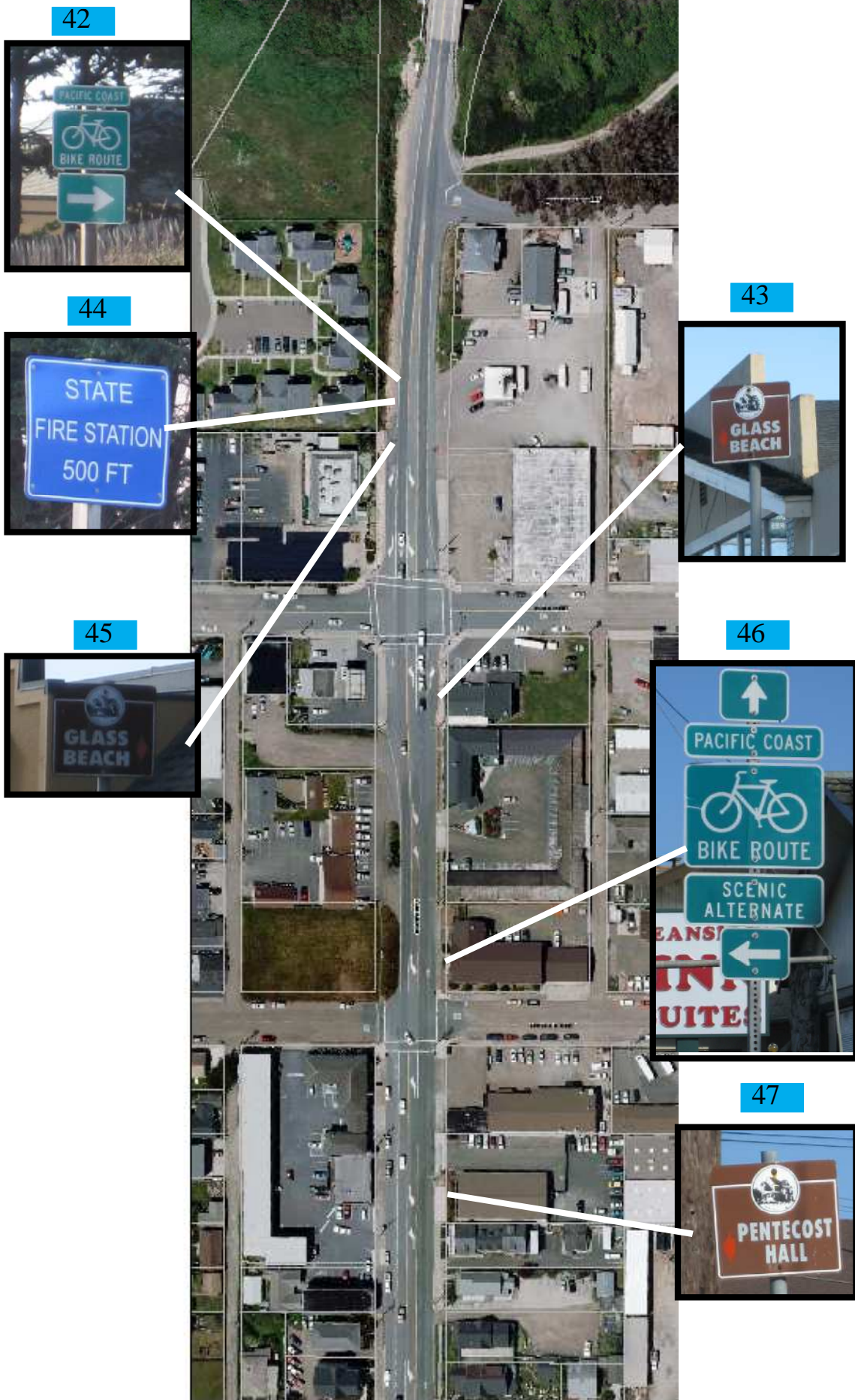
Oak Street to Laurel Street



Laurel Street to Bush Street



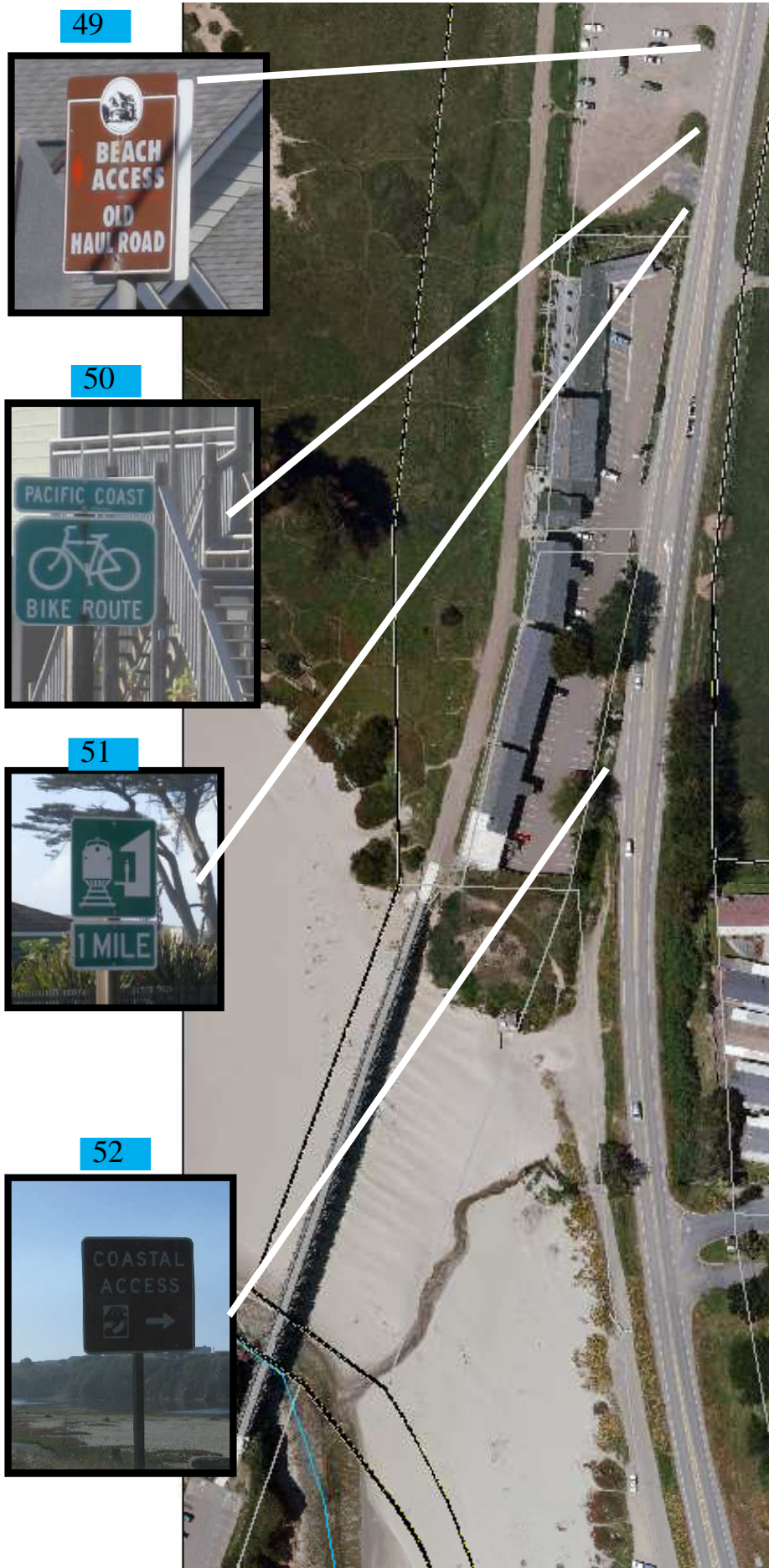






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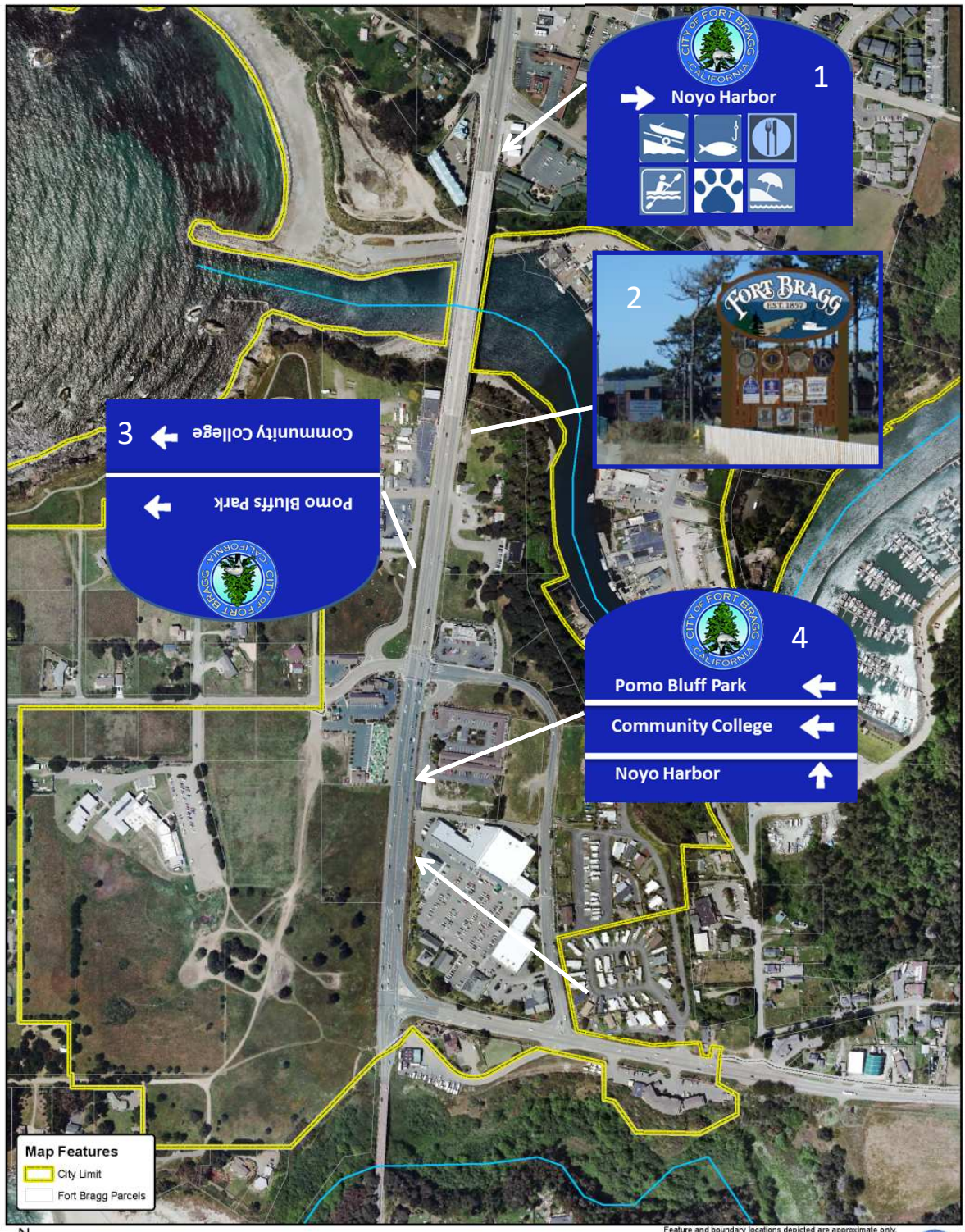




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12.APPENDIX B: PROPOSED SIGNAGE PLAN



View southbound signs, upside down

City of Fort Bragg

View northbound signs right side up

Figure 14: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – Hare Creek to North Harbor Drive





0 300 600 Feet

View southbound signs, upside down

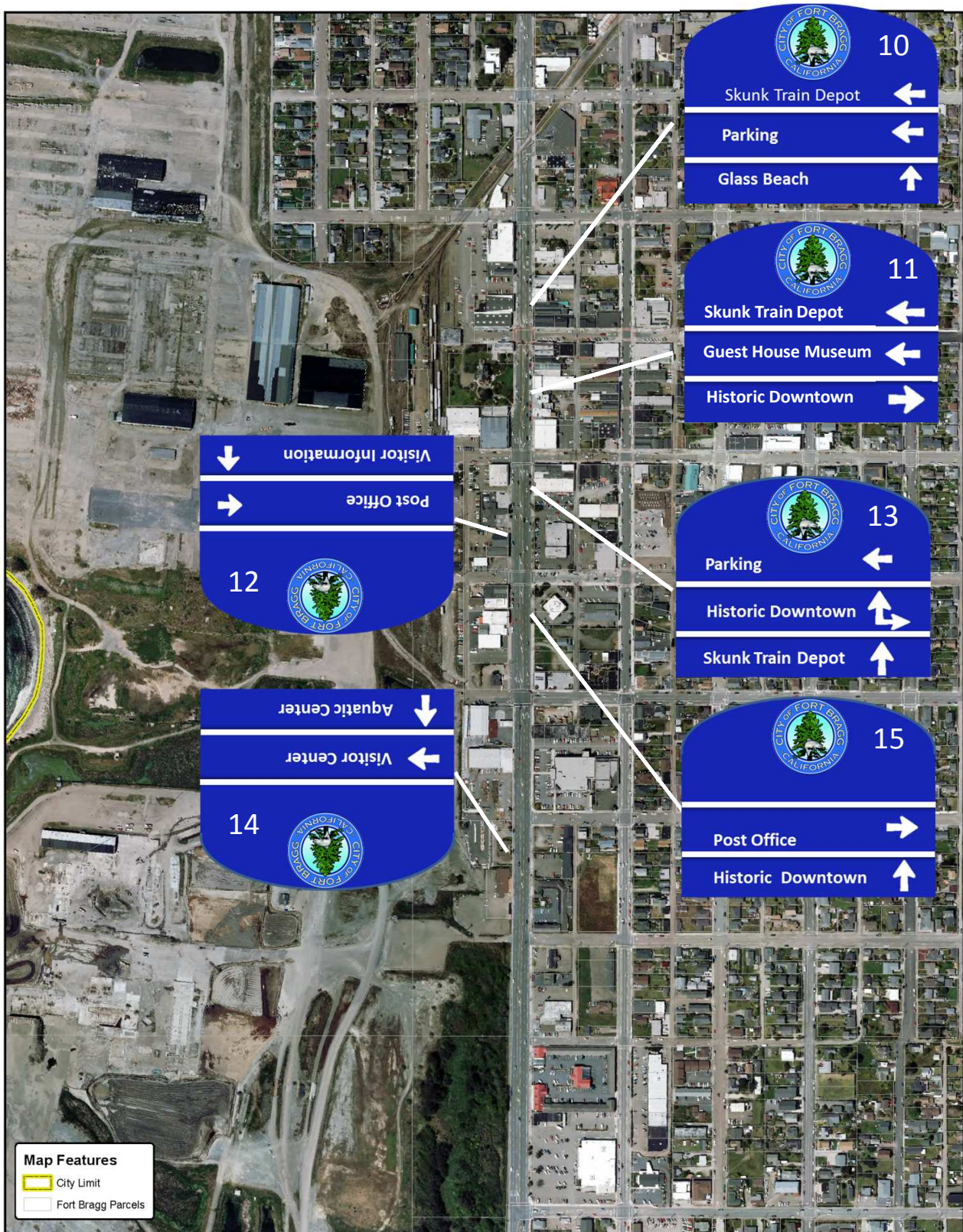
City of Fort Bragg

View northbound signs right side up



Figure 15: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – North Harbor Drive to Maple Street



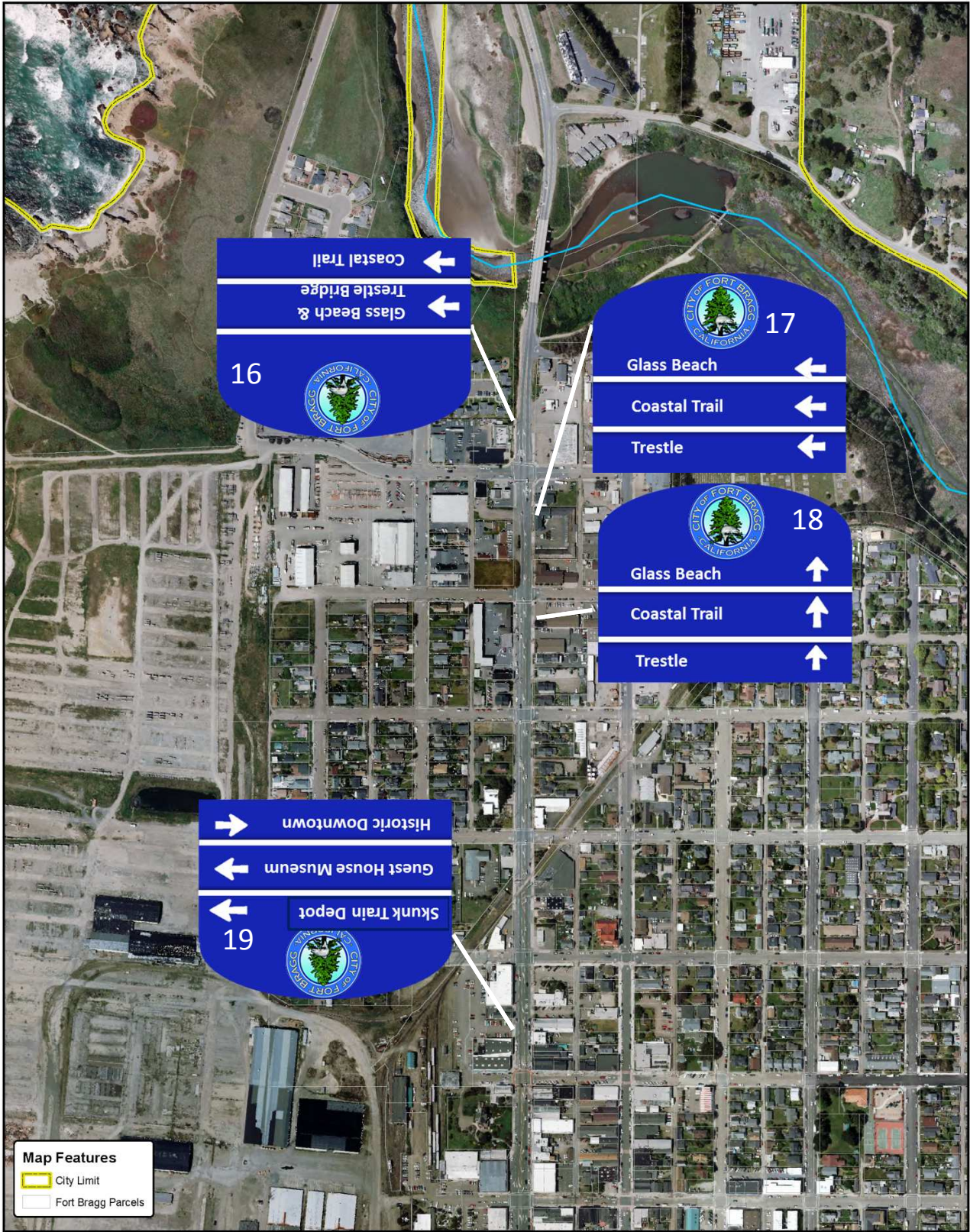


View southbound signs, upside down

City of Fort Bragg

View northbound signs right side up

Figure 16: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – Maple Street to Pine Street



0 300 600 Feet

**City of Fort Bragg**



View southbound signs, upside down

View northbound signs right side up

**Figure 17: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – Pine Street to Pudding Creek Rd.**



Feature and boundary locations depicted are approximate only.



View southbound signs, upside down

City of Fort Bragg

View northbound signs right side up



Figure 18: Auto Oriented Wayfinding Plan – Pudding Creek Rd. to Virgin Creek

**13.APPENDIX C: COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF EXISTING & PROPOSED SIGNAGE**

**Appendix C. Comparison of Comprehensive List of Existing & Proposed Signage for Main Street, Fort Bragg**

| Existing Sign #<br>(See Appendix A) |   | Replacement Sign Number (see Appendix B)               |  |        |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|--------|
| A)                                  | Sign Message  | Status   | Justification  | B)     |
| 1                                   | Fort Bragg City Limit                                     | Retain   | Caltrans Sign  | retain |
| 2                                   | Hare Creek Beach  | Retain 3rd Party Sign                                  | Retain, required by Coastal Conservancy  | retain |
| 3                                   | Highway 20 Junction                                       | Retain   | Caltrans Sign  | retain |
| 4                                   | Fort Bragg Direction Sign                                 | Retain   | Caltrans Sign  | retain |
| 5                                   | North Harbor Dr. Noyo Harbor Right Turn                   | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Sign is unsightly and blocks view of the harbor. Wayfinding signage will provide better visibility   | 1, 4   |
| 6                                   | College of the Redwood Mendocino Campus, Coastal View     | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Signs are disjointed and the wayfinding sign will provide more information   | 3      |
| 7                                   | Fort Bragg Monument Sign                                  | Replace and relocate with new monument sign            | Sign is unsightly, not to Caltrans standards, difficult to read and located on private property. The current land owner wants the sign moved by June of 2015 | 2      |
| 8                                   | Pomo Bluffs Park  | Retain   | Well designed monument sign  | retain |
| 9                                   | Mendocino College   | Retain   | Well designed monument sign  | retain |
| 10                                  | College of the Redwood Mendocino Campus, Coastal View     | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Signs are disjointed and the wayfinding sign will provide more information   | 4      |
| 11                                  | Police  | Retain   | Required by Caltrans Signage Manual  | retain |
| 12                                  | Hospital H  | Retain   | Required by Caltrans Signage Manual  | retain |
| 13                                  | Ten Mile Justice Center, Hospital Police                  | Remove   | Does not comply with Caltrans sign standards   | remove |
| 14                                  | Coastal Access  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan   | 7, 8   |
| 15                                  | Hospital H  | Retain   | Required by Caltrans Signage Manual  | retain |
| 16                                  | North Harbor Dr. Noyo Harbor                              | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan   | 7, 8   |
| 17                                  | Fort Bragg 1857   | Retain, 3rd party sign                                 |  | retain |
| 18                                  | Noyo Harbor Beach Access                                  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan              | 7, 8   |
| 19                                  | Schools Athletic Fields                                   | Remove   | Does not comply with Caltrans sign standards   | remove |
| 20                                  | Fire engine   | Retain   |  | retain |
| 21                                  | Tourist Info  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan   | 5, 9   |
| 22                                  | Public Parking  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan              | 13     |
| 23                                  | Tourist Info  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan   | 14     |
| 24                                  | Tourist Info  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan   | 5      |
| 25                                  | Swim Symbol   | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan   | 6      |
| 26                                  | Historic District   | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan              | 11, 13 |
| 27                                  | Library, fottlighters, parking, veterans hall             | Remove and replace some of content in wayfinding signs | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan              | 13     |
| 28                                  | Fire truck  | Retain   |  | retain |
| 29                                  | City Hall, Rec Center, Library Parking, Historic District | Remove and replace some of content in wayfinding signs | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan              | 11     |
| 30                                  | Starr Center  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan              | 14     |
| 31                                  | Historic District   | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan              | 15     |
| 32                                  | Public Parking  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan              | 13     |
| 33                                  | Public Parking  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan              | 13     |
| 34                                  | Welcome to Historic Downtown                              | Retain   | High quality monument sign that fits with monument signage program   | retain |
| 35                                  | State Fire Station 500 ft                                 | Retain   | Regulatory Sign  | retain |
| 36                                  | Train Station   | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan   | 11     |
| 37                                  | Cotton Auditorium Senior Center                           | Remove   | Does not comply with Caltrans sign standards   | remove |
| 38                                  | Library Public Parking                                    | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan   | 10     |
| 39                                  | Public Parking  | Replace content in wayfinding signs                    | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan   | 13     |

**Existing Sign #  
(See Appendix**

**Replacement Sign  
Number (see Appendix  
B)**

| <b>A)</b> | <b>Sign Message</b>             | <b>Status</b>                       | <b>Justification</b>  | <b>B)</b> |
|-----------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 40        | Historic District veterans Hall | Replace content in wayfinding signs | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan  | 19        |
| 41        | Train Station public parking    | Replace content in wayfinding signs | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan  | 10        |
| 42        | Pacific Coast Bike Route        | Retain                              | Regulatory Sign   | 16        |
| 43        | Glass Beach                     | Replace content in wayfinding signs | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan | 16        |
| 44        | State Fire Station 500 ft       | Retain                              | Regulatory Sign   | retain    |
| 45        | Glass Beach                     | Replace content in wayfinding signs | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan | 16        |
| 46        | Pacific Coastal Bike Route      | Retain                              | Regulatory Sign   | retain    |
| 47        | Pentecost Hall                  | remove                              | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards.   | remove    |
| 48        | Coastal Access                  | Replace content in wayfinding signs | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan  | 20        |
| 49        | Beach Access/ Old Haul Road     | Replace content in wayfinding signs | Sign does not comply with Caltrans standards. Improve legibility of community by including destinations as part of consolidated wayfinding plan | 20        |
| 50        | Pacific Coast Bike Route        | Retain                              | Regulatory Sign   | retain    |
| 51        | Train/ I Mile                   | remove                              | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan  | remove    |
| 52        | Coastal Access                  | Replace content in wayfinding signs | Improve legibility of community by including as part of consolidated wayfinding plan  | 20        |
| 53        | Fort Bragg Welcomes You         | Retain                              |   | retain    |
| 54        | Fort Bragg City Limit           | Retain                              | Regulatory Sign   | retain    |

**Total Existing Signs: 54**

**Total Proposed Signs: 39**