

CHARACTER INVENTORY & DESIGN GUIDELINES

Highway 395 Scenic Byway Corridor Communities
Mono County, CA



Design Idea Book

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Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this document is to provide design recommendations for public and private realm improvements in communities along U.S. Route 395 in the Eastern Sierra. Public realm improvements include recommendations for signage and wayfinding as well as the configuration of the highway, access for pedestrians and bicyclists, and streetscape as it passes through individual communities. Private realm improvements include ways in which private property owners may improve their frontage. Opportunities for public and private improvements should be considered as important components of a strategy to improve and unify the corridor that can support Highway 395's potential designation as a National Scenic Byway.

National Scenic Byways are designated by the United States Department of Transportation with the aim to "recognize, preserve, and enhance" significant roads in the U.S. Roads are designated because of their unique scenic, historical, recreational, cultural, archeological and/or natural intrinsic qualities. A road must apply to be designated, proving the intrinsic quality(ies) that should be celebrated. Designation of Highway 395 as a National Scenic Byway has the potential to attract tourists and visitors to the area; it may also make federal funds available to help make improvements in support of the designation.

A National Scenic Byway application would require a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) describing the County's strategy to improve and maintain the corridor as a scenic byway. This Design Ideas Book is seen as an important step in identifying content and approach for a future CMP.

This document seeks to first, document the unique, and varied, community character along Highway 395, while offering design ideas on how to build upon that character in a thoughtful manner to make every contribution a positive step toward National designation, and Mono County's distinct sense of place.

Introduction



Experiencing the corridor first-hand on a walk audit in Walker



Meeting with the business community in June Lake



Presenting preliminary design ideas at the end of the workshop in Walker



Community members on a walk audit in June Lake

Document Organization

This document presents character inventory and design guidelines for the communities along Highway 395. The design ideas range from creating context zones in the various communities, to detailing improvement ideas in both the public and private realm. The communities are explored north to south, as follows:

- Coleville
- Walker
- Bridgeport
- Lee Vining
- June Lake
- Mammoth Lakes, and
- Crowley Lake and Long Valley

An appendix provides information on gateway signage for the communities along the corridor. The discussion includes preliminary thoughts on branding Highway 395, precedent studies from other National Scenic Byways, and conceptual ideas for various approaches.

Guiding Principles

Three guiding principles informed the ideas presented in this document:

1. **Respect changing contexts along the corridor.** This section of Highway 395 traverses over 100 miles of changing terrain and multiple communities. There are many locations where the relationship between the highway and its context can be improved, in order to increase visitor accessibility, and fully capitalize on its unique places and intrinsic qualities. Special attention should be given to the design of the highway where it approaches and passes through communities.
2. **Promote multi-modal access.** Although the highway is primarily experienced by vehicle drivers, access for public transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians can be improved. Highway 395 is an important route for bicycle touring, and could increase tourism if amenities were added to increase safety and ease of use. Within communities, pedestrian access is important for both locals and visitors to reach daily destinations and services. Improving comfort and designing to increase pedestrian and bicycle activity can increase business activity.
3. **Build upon the existing character within each community.** The seven communities along this section of Highway 395 have distinct qualities that together make up a diverse and varied experience for the visitor. These distinct qualities can be emphasized and built upon, forming a basis for future improvements, including private initiatives (e.g. facade renovations, signage), and public initiatives (e.g. streetscape improvements, gateway and wayfinding signage, landscaping).

Summary of Public Process

During the week of July 28th through August 1st, 2014, the design team conducted a series of design workshops, spending half of the week in the north part of the County in Coleville and Walker, and half of the week in the south in June Lake and Crowley Lake.

In both Walker and June Lake, the design team met with business owners, interested community members, and agency representatives to discuss opportunities and challenges unique to each community. The team also completed a walking audit to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to point out firsthand the more nuanced assets and constraints of their community.

Both workshops ended with presentations to the community members of the team's preliminary design ideas, allowing for immediate feedback and guidance on various public and private improvements.

The week also included touring and documenting the character of each community along Highway 395, hoping to capture the great places and elements that will contribute to a National Scenic Byway.

Project Overview

Communities along Hwy 395

Coleville	pg. I-2	A
Walker	pg. I-3	B
Bridgeport	pg. I-13	C
Lee Vining	pg. I-15	D
June Lake	pg. I-17	E
Mammoth Lakes	pg. I-24	F
Crowley Lake and Long Valley	pg. I-26	G



A Coleville



E June Lake



B Walker



F Mammoth Lakes



C Bridgeport



G Crowley Lake and Long Valley



D Lee Vining



Character Inventory and Community Design Concepts

Coleville: Character Inventory

Building Character



Building with recessed stoop and wood siding



Gable-ended building with wood siding and stone chimney



Gable-ended historic town dance hall

Frontage Character



Yard with retaining pond



Historic drive-through with retaining wall



Undefined, large setback

Signage Character



Yard sign incorporates area history.



Sidewalk sign; yard sign



Old arched entry to Hardy Park

Public Realm and Open Space



Cottonwoods are iconic along Highway 395 in Coleville.



One of two wooden bridges over East Walker River



East Walker River

Walker: Character Inventory

Building Character



Strong geometric shapes and colors

Frontage Character



Outdoor seating beneath shade and porch

Signage Character



Gateway sign to Antelope Valley

Public Realm and Open Space



Fishing at Mountain Gate



Western wood storefront with porch



Landscaping holds the street edge.



Metal details on wood sign; historic neon sign



Community park



Mid-century roof frame with wood siding



Engaged porch with wood-decking seating area



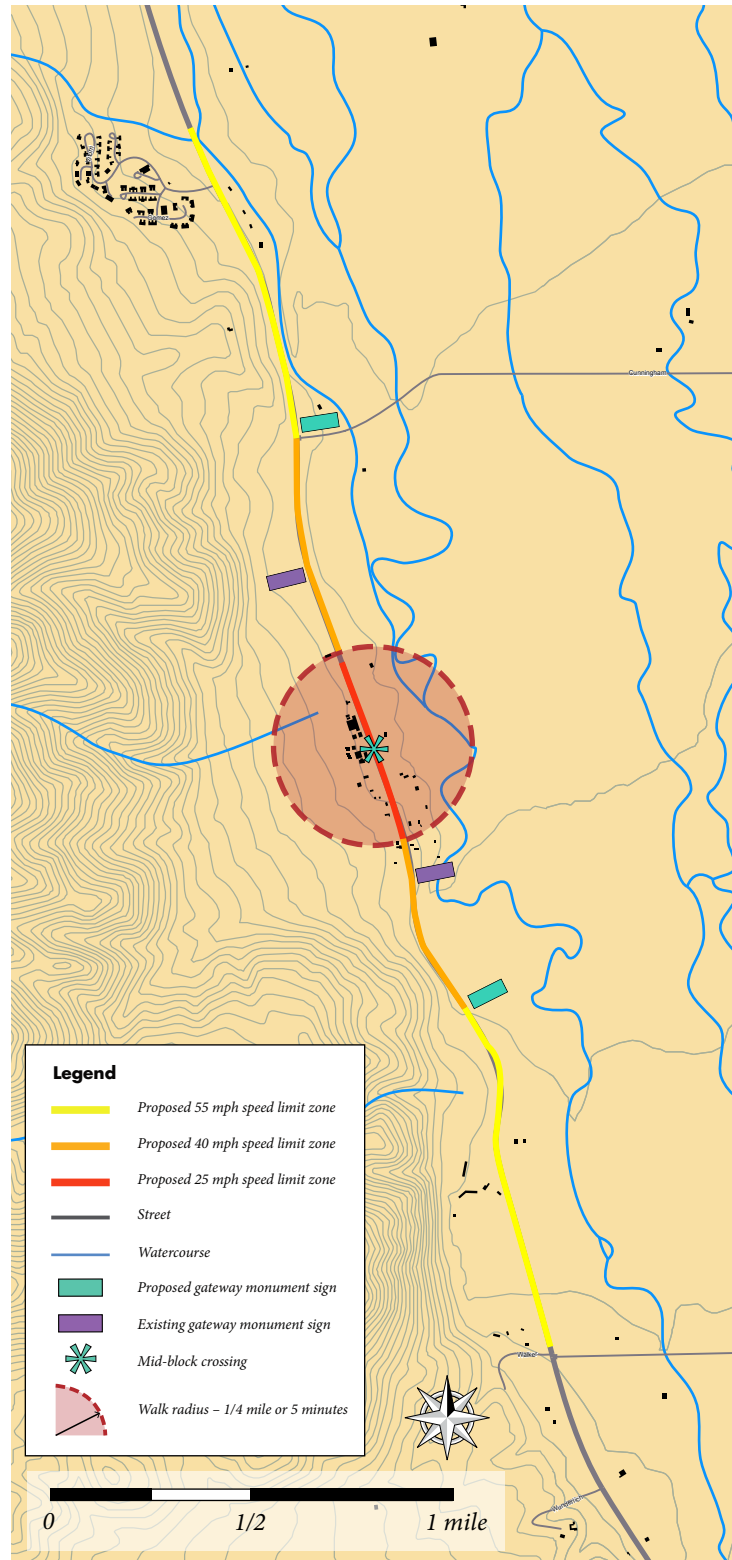
Painted sign with birdhouses



Wide right-of-way encourages high speeds.

Coleville

Context Zone Map



Coleville benefits from Highway 395 remaining just two-lanes wide through town and the location of the school district at the north edge of town, which triggers a 25 mph speed zone.

The 25 mph speed limit should extend a quarter-mile in either direction from the schools, extending a pedestrian-friendly environment through the core of the community. Gateway signage should be placed about a half-mile farther out, creating a physical cue to drivers that they are entering town, coordinated with a speed limit of 40 mph.

Coleville Illustrative Plan



Public Realm Improvements

A Colorized Shoulders/Bike Lanes

Along with new gateway signage, colorized bike lanes will signal to drivers that they are in a different context and should slow down and can help connect the community to the elementary and high school.

B High School Parking Lot

Formalize the parking lot for high school students; provide landscaping at the sidewalk to enliven the public realm.

C Wide Sidewalk with Bus Lane

The current bus lane functions well; add a wide sidewalk to provide ample space for bus loading and unloading.

D Mid-block Crossing with Pedestrian Refuge

Repaint the mid-block crosswalk with white, perpendicular lines for high visibility; in the long-term, add an island to serve as a pedestrian refuge and create a safe crossing to a revitalized Hardy Park.

E Revitalization of Hardy Park

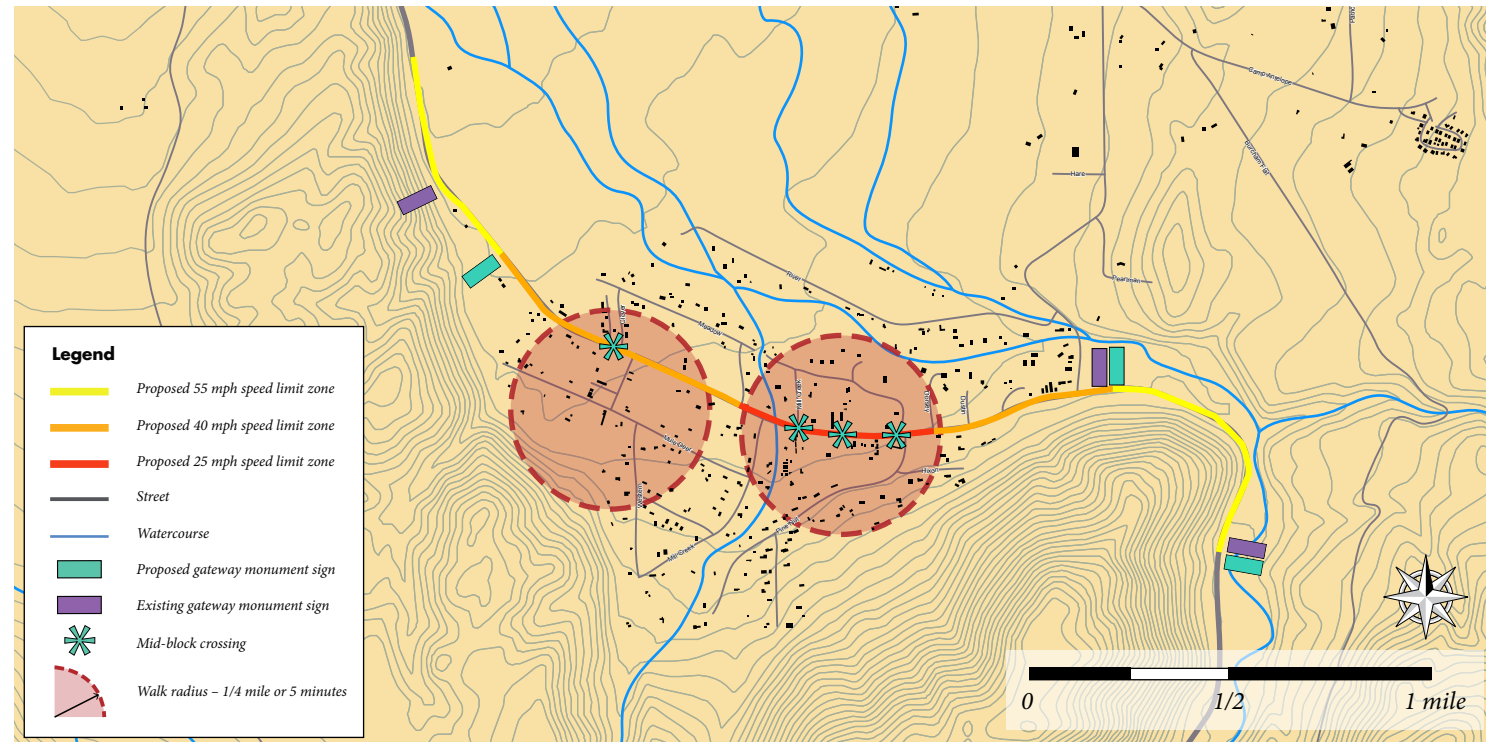
Recreate and/or beautify Hardy Park, including rebuilding the footbridge over the stormwater ditch; this could serve as both an amenity for community members and an image of identity for the community.

F Local Path Connections

Build a path of varying material to join private properties through Coleville and create a continuous path for pedestrians.

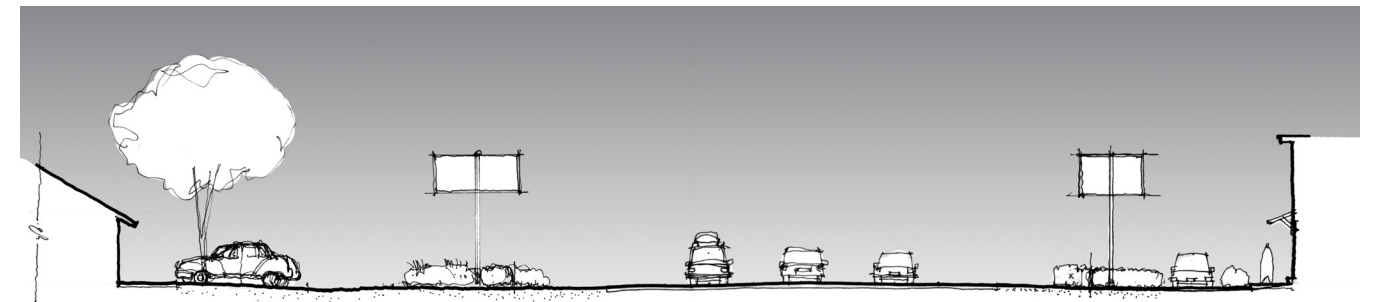
Walker

Context Zone Map

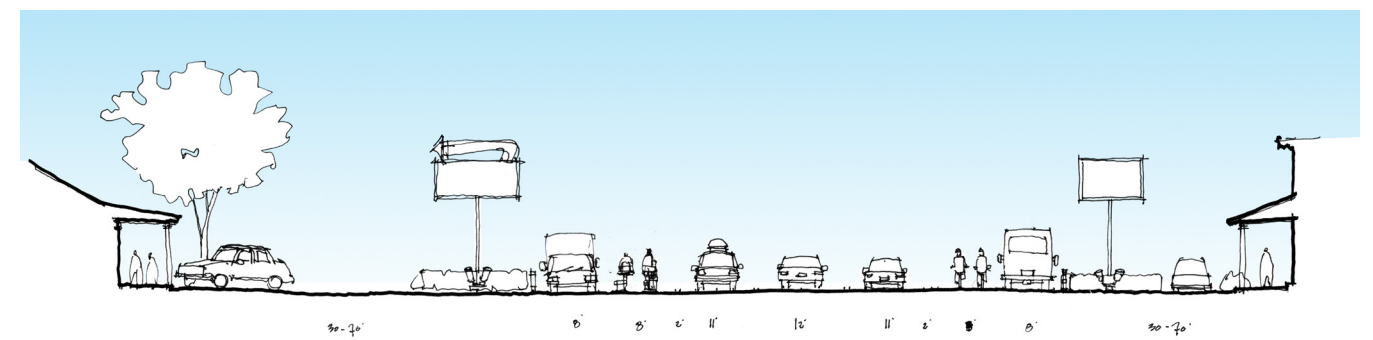


As drivers approach Walker, the speed should reduce gradually from 65 to 55. One half-mile on either side of Walker, a gateway sign could announce to drivers that they are arriving into Walker: for westbound drivers, the gateway sign could coincide with a trailhead to Mountain Gate; for eastbound, the fire fighter memorial could be enhanced to announce the entrance to Walker. The first context zone would have a speed of 40 mph, transitioning to a third context zone in the more commercially dense area of town. This third zone would be pedestrian-oriented, with a max speed of 25 mph, increasing comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists, and encouraging drivers to access local Walker businesses.

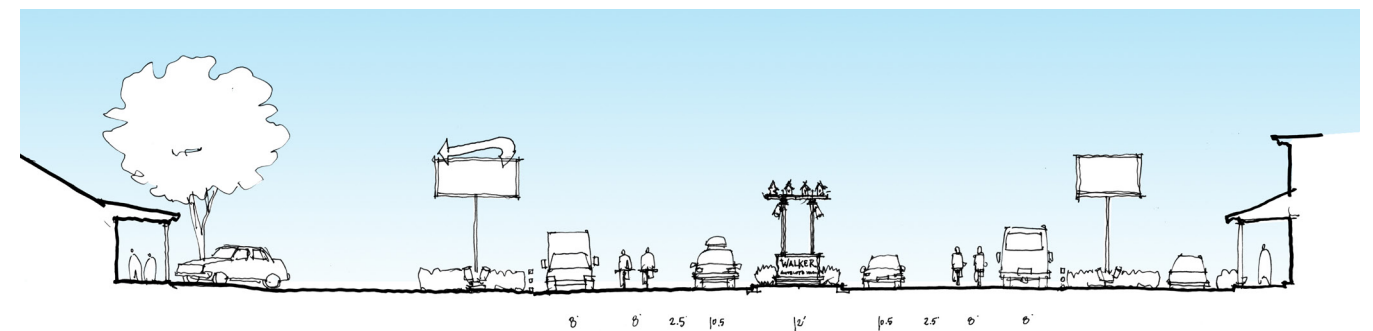
Phased Street Sections



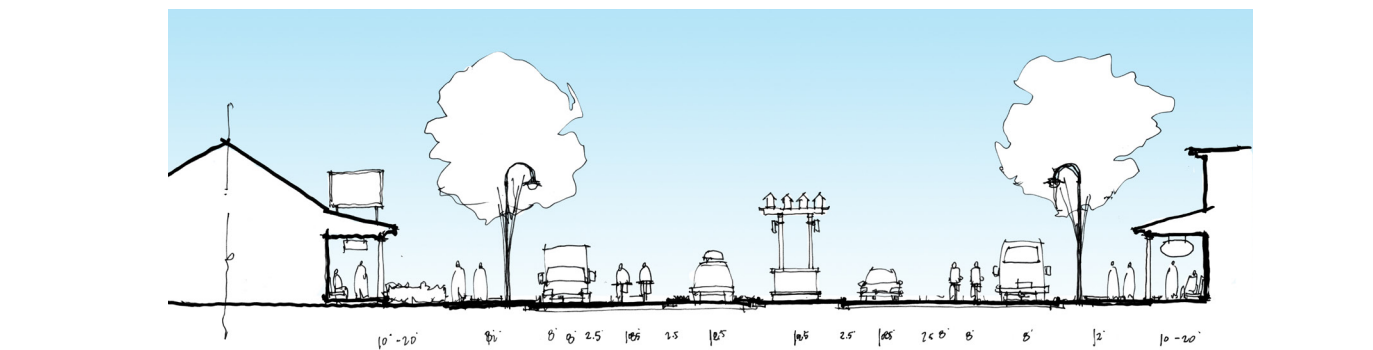
Existing right-of-way



Phase I: Add colored, buffered bike lanes



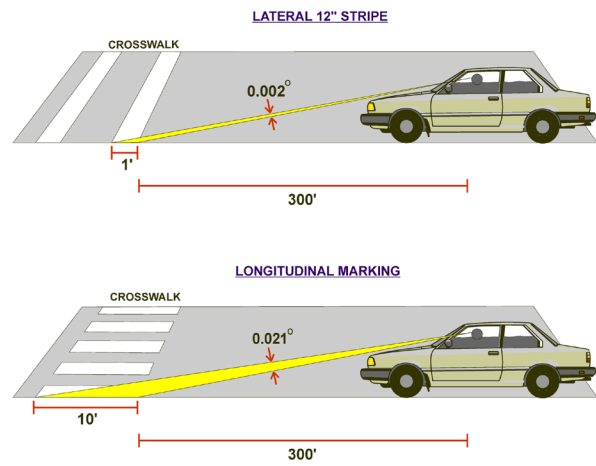
Phase II: Add mid-block crossings with pedestrian refuges; median doubles as a gateway element



Phase III: Street trees and pedestrian-scaled lighting in the core of the community; infill buildings are built closer to the right-of-way to encourage slower traffic

Walker and Coleville: Public Realm

Crosswalks



Crosswalks should be painted with 10 foot longitudinal lines, which are more visible to the driver.



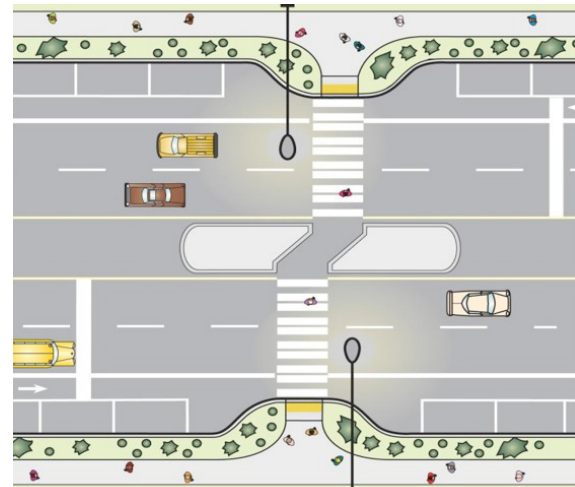
Stamped concrete has the appearance of brick; this both provides a color for visibility and a tactile reminder to drivers to slow down.



Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon flashes every second to announce that a pedestrian is present at the roadway.

Photo credit: <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/resources>

Medians and Pedestrian Refuges



Median islands can provide a pedestrian refuge for crossing wide streets; this would be especially useful in Walker where there is a wide ROW.



Median islands make the travel lane visually seem tighter, which can help reduce speeds and make a community more walkable.



A median island provides landscape and a gateway element into the community of Cloverdale, CA.

Bicycle Lanes



Colorized bicycle lanes are more visible to drivers; color can be integral to the asphalt mixture for increased durability.



Buffered bike lanes add a 2-3 foot space to protect bicyclists from higher-speed traffic that would be present on a state highway.



A traditional bike lane with parallel parking and two lanes of vehicular traffic

Public Gathering Spaces



McGee Creek near Crowley Lake offers access to enjoy the creek.



Pocket plaza in Lee Vining offers a place for pedestrians to stop along Highway 395.



A community park with pavilion in Calistoga

Walker and Coleville: Streetscape Components

Street Trees

American Sweetgum



Photo credit: www.thetreeplantation.com



Photo credit: www.treepicturesonline.com

Raywood Ash



Photo credit: www.bigtreesupply.com



Photo credit: www.orgeonstate.edu

Water Birch



Photo credits: www.bowpointnursery.com



Photo credit: www.calflora.org



Photo credit: www.calflora.org, www.treebrowser.org

Recommended Tree Species

	American Sweetgum	Raywood Ash	Water Birch
Species	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	<i>Fraxinus oxycarpa 'Raywood'</i>	<i>Betula occidentalis</i>
Height	60-70 feet	40-50 feet	20-30 feet
Spread	45 feet	25-30 feet	Multi-trunk
Fall Color	Red	Red/purple	Yellow/Yellow-green
Purpose	Street tree	Street tree	Plant in bunches/Use as infill

Pedestrian-Scaled Lighting

Light Bollards

Walker is proud of its identity as a rural, working community. During the workshop community members discussed whether streetlights would be appropriate. Pedestrian-scaled lighting could be achieved by lining Highway 395 with 36-inch tall lit bollards rather than conventional streetlights. This would provide a downcast light illuminating the ground and create an ambiance unique to Walker.

Bollards could be spaced every 15-25 feet, balancing the priorities of better lighting for safety and dark sky compliance with the expense of frequently placed bollard fixtures.



Traditional/Western LED Bollard: Sternberg Lighting Austin model; Mid-Century Modern LED Bollard: Philips Lumec CALB2 model; Solar-powered Bollard: Reliance Foundry R-9810-FL model



Bollards illuminate town gathering space; solar-powered bollards line rural road

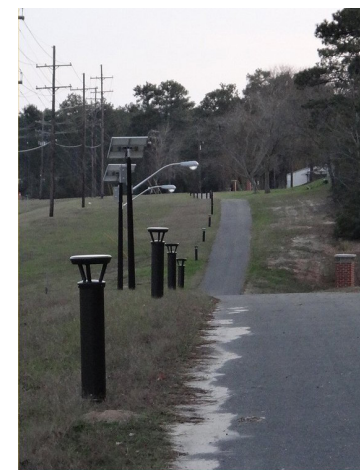


Photo credits: www.archiexpo.com, www.reliance-foundry.com

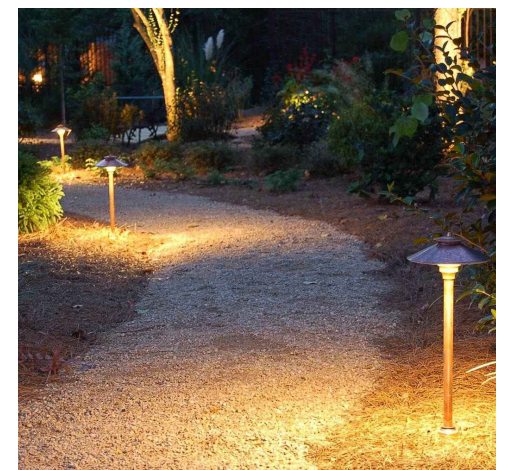
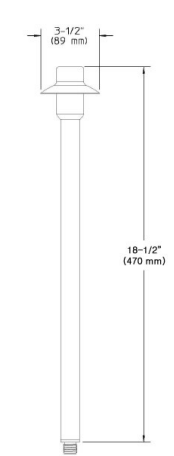
Path and Sign Lighting

To encourage tourists to stop in Walker, downcast sign lighting would add a lot of visibility to the community's businesses and help for nighttime navigation. These lights could attach to existing walls and monument signs.

Walker might also celebrate its unique identity by providing pedestrian-scaled lighting through simple path lighting along a connected local path network. Each property owner could purchase individual fixtures, or the town could select a standard for purchase and distribution. This can be an identifying element that helps to unify paths as they meander and change character between properties.



Downlighting for wall signage: B-K Lighting SignStar Style A and E; Solar-powered sign light: Carmanah EG series



Path lighting: Philips Hadco Copper Pathlyte CUL2; Path lighting illuminates decomposed gravel walkway

Photo credit: <http://blog.louielighting.com/low-voltage-landscape-lighting/>

Walker: Private Realm Improvements

Slip Lane and Parking



A slip lane gives access to parking at Walker Burger.

Local Path Networks



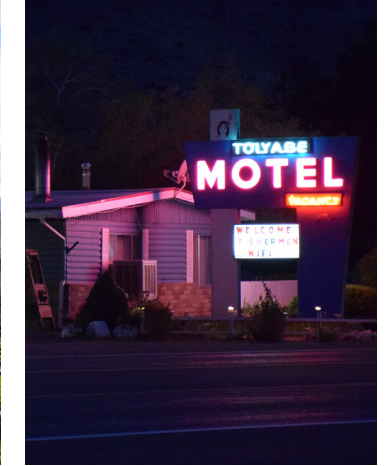
Two businesses are joined by a pedestrian path at the building edge; changes in material could add to the charm of a pedestrian network.

Landscaping



Landscaping adds color and visual interest to the highway; placing landscaping at the ROW will help to slow traffic.

Signage and Sign Lighting



Neon-lit signs are iconic in Walker.



Similarly, a slip lane connects multiple businesses; this could increase foot traffic and facilitate visits to neighboring properties.



A stone walkway in the Toiyabe Motel landscaping provides access for guests to cross to restaurants across HWY 395.



Working landscapes reuse historic machinery as accent pieces in a simple yard; .



Painted sign in Walker; could be lit from above.



In Chico, California, a frontage road connects multiple businesses, and safe parking. Photo credit: www.google.com



Existing wood-slat walkway runs at the building face, and could extend to an adjoining property to create a pedestrian network.



Painted tires serve as flower pots in Lee Vining.



Sign lighting that faces down to reduce light pollution: B-K Lighting Twin SignStar Style A

Walker: Public and Private Realm Improvements

Walker Illustrative Plan



Public Realm Improvements

A West Walker Gateway

Walker's landscape and character have been shaped by fire. The existing memorial to the 2002 crash of a C-130 firefighting tanker can serve as the western gateway into town.

B ESTA Bus Stop

The ESTA bus stop could be formalized with a drive-through lane for buses. This improvement would create frontage to plant landscaping and to beautify the entry-point of various tourists arriving by bus.

C Mill Creek Seating Area

Work with property owner(s) to create a small outdoor gathering space along the river.

D Mid-block Crossings

The right-of-way in Walker is wide with few locations to provide crossings. Midblock crossings with medians for pedestrian refuge would increase safety and encourage more pedestrian traffic.

E Colorized Bike Lanes

Many bicyclists tour along Highway 395 using the shoulder. A bike lane should be formalized. Colorized bike lanes will signal to drivers that they are in a different context and should slow down.

F East Walker Trailhead and Gateway Sign

Construct a trail connecting Walker to the amenities at Mountain Gate. The trailhead could serve as a gateway into Walker from the south where the roadway context can change.

Mountain Gate Trailhead and Fishing Platform (not pictured)

The new fishing platform is a community asset that should be made accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists.

Walker: Public and Private Realm Improvements (Continued)



Walker Illustrative Plan: Zoom in of Commercial Core



Walker Illustrative Plan: Zoom in of Western Portion of the Corridor



Walker Illustrative Plan: Zoom in of East Walker Trail Head

Public Realm Improvements (zoomed in)

- B** ESTA Bus Stop
(See previous page for description)
- C** Mill Creek Seating Area
(See previous page for description)
- D** Mid-block Crossings
(See previous page for description)
- E** Colorized Bike Lanes
(See previous page for description)
- F** East Walker Trailhead and Gateway Sign
(See previous page for description)

Private Realm Improvements

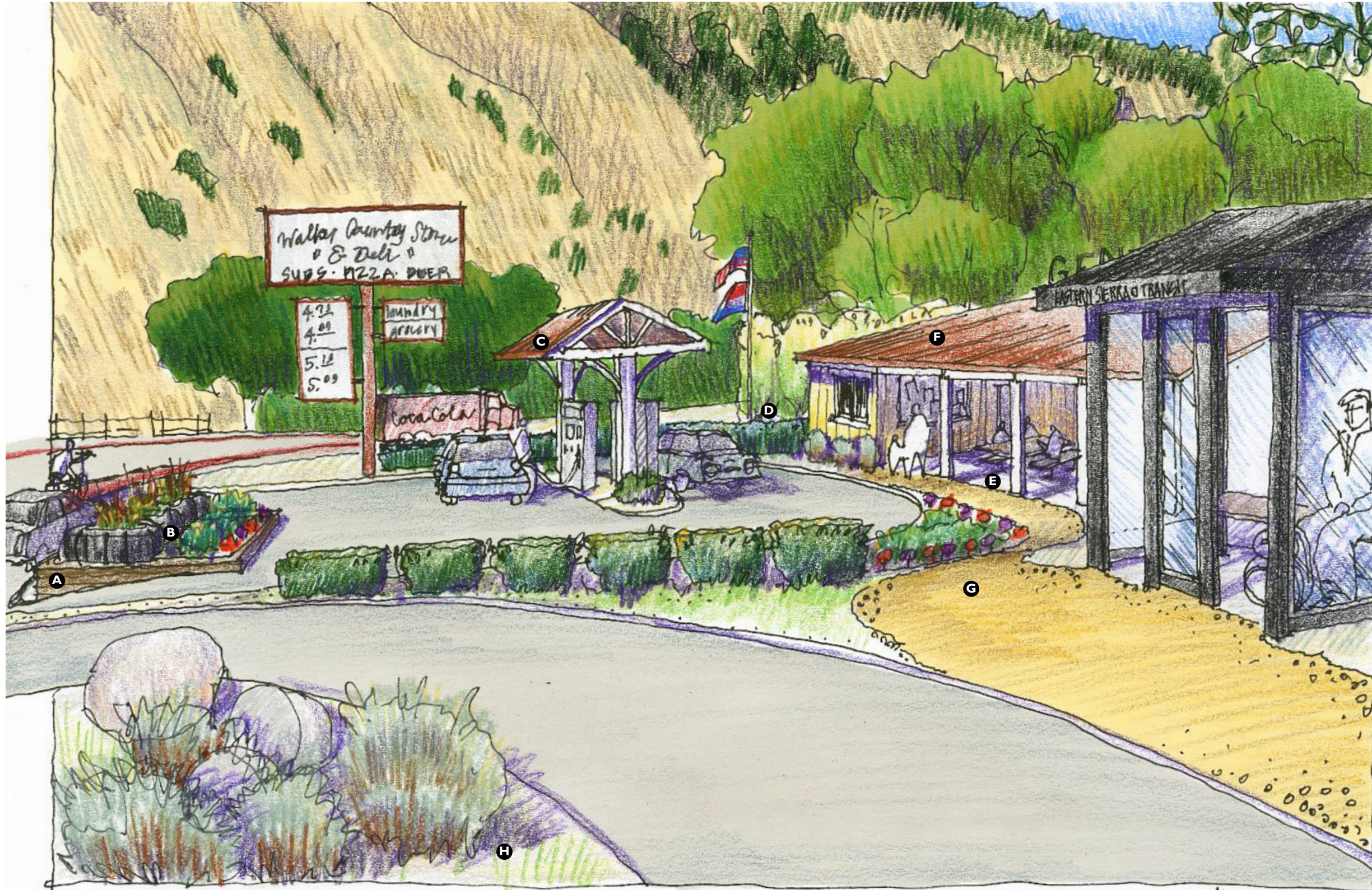
- G** Slip Lane with Parking
Slip lanes provide safer access to parking and reduce curb cuts; slip lanes providing access to multiple businesses encourage foot traffic.
- H** Local Connected Paths
Adjoining properties should build a path for pedestrians near the building face; pedestrian paths can provide increased connectivity without jeopardizing the rural character of Walker.
- I** Landscaping at the Public Right-of-Way
Use street trees and other vegetation to landscape at the street's edge, visually unifying the streetscape, enclosing the highway, and encouraging drivers to slow down.

Building Frontage Improvements: Example 1 (Coleville Antiques)



- Example 1**
- Flower box at right-of-way **A**
 - Renovated porch with new handrail **B**
 - Slip lane with diagonal parking **C**
 - Local path at face of building **D**
 - Landscaping against the fence **E**

Building Frontage Improvements: Example 2 (Walker Country Store)



Example 2

- Landscaping at street **A**
- Re-use of rubber tires for flower pots **B**
- New gas canopy **C**
- Landscaping to hide clutter **D**
- Engaged porch provides outdoor seating **E**
- New roof with signage **F**
- Local path of decomposed gravel between parcels **G**
- Local vegetation of sagebrush **H**

Bridgeport: Character Inventory

Building Character



Historic courthouse

Frontage Character



Storefront with canopy

Signage Character



Blade sign on historic hotel; entry signage from the south



Public Realm and Open Space



Three-lane road with bike lanes and back-in angle parking



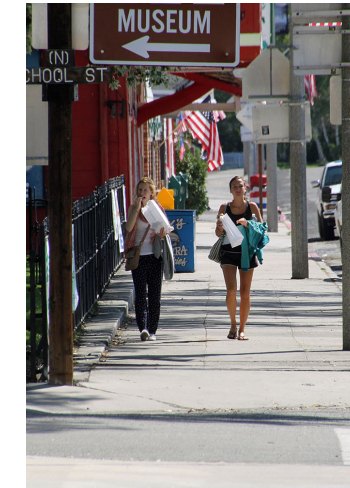
False facades; contiguous buildings along Main Street



Deep setback with paved walkway and fence



Wall sign



Wide sidewalks for strolling; newly built School St. Plaza



White shingle siding, green trim



Dooryard with outdoor seating and bench



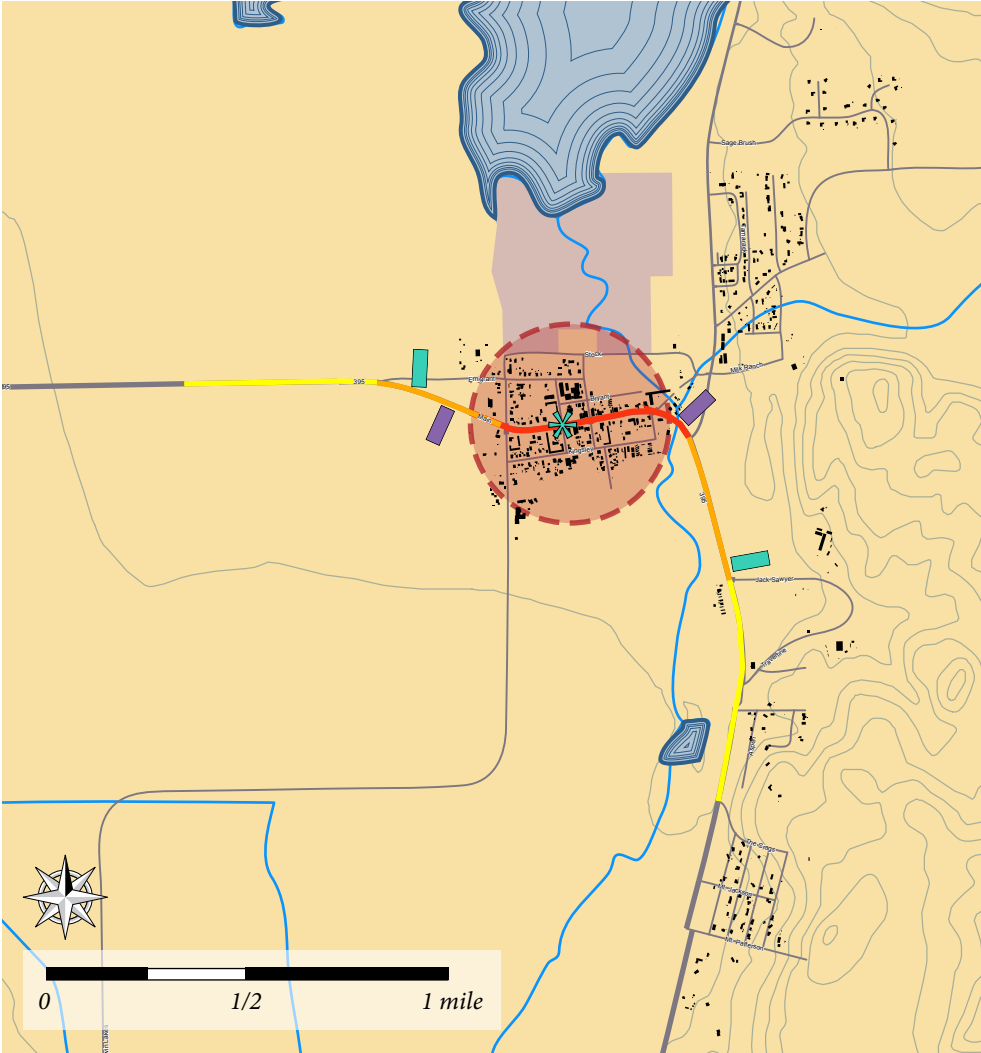
Historic neon signs



Bridgeport Valley

Bridgeport

Context Zone Map



Recent changes to Bridgeport's Main Street have helped to reduce traffic speeds and provide more space for pedestrians and bicyclists. More can be done to reduce speed and increase multi-modal access.

Context zones should be encouraged through physical cues to the driver. Gateway signs would act as the physical reminder to slow to a 40 mph speed limit, while Main Street from Twin Lakes Road to the West Walker River bridge should be a pedestrian zone of 25 mph.

- Legend**
- Proposed 55 mph speed limit zone
 - Proposed 40 mph speed limit zone
 - Proposed 25 mph speed limit zone
 - Street
 - Watercourse
 - Proposed gateway monument sign
 - Existing gateway monument sign
 - ✱ Mid-block crossing
 - ⬢ Walk radius - 1/4 mile or 5 minutes