



Wayfinding Assessment

Swartz Creek, MI

SWC1848 | SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

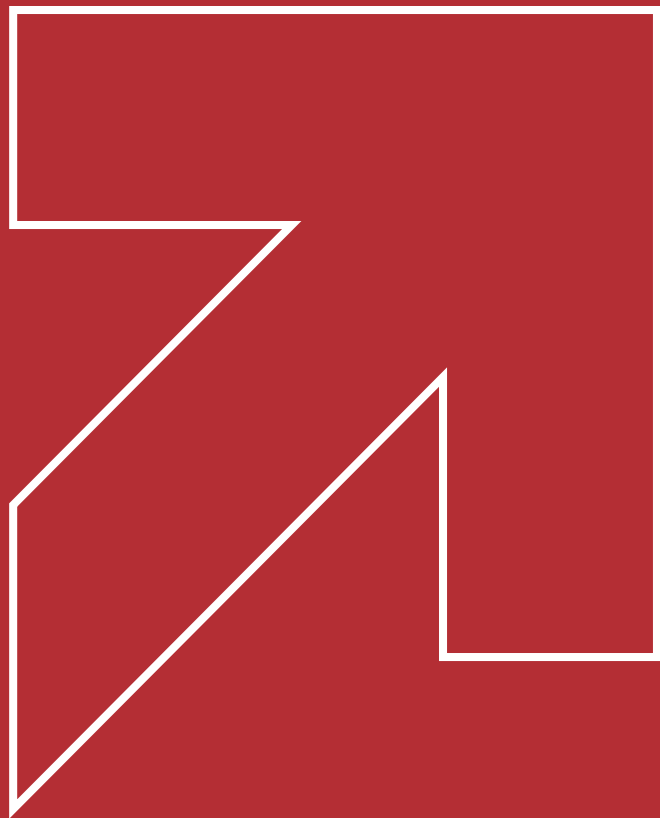


The Process

Guide Studio has gone through the following steps to develop this framework for your Wayfinding Program:

THE PROCESS TO DATE

- > Discussion with the client core team
- > Discovery session with the steering committee
- > Driving tour of the city
- > Internal strategy workshop
- > Review session with client core team
- > Wayfinding Assessment development
- > Sign Program Conceptual Designs



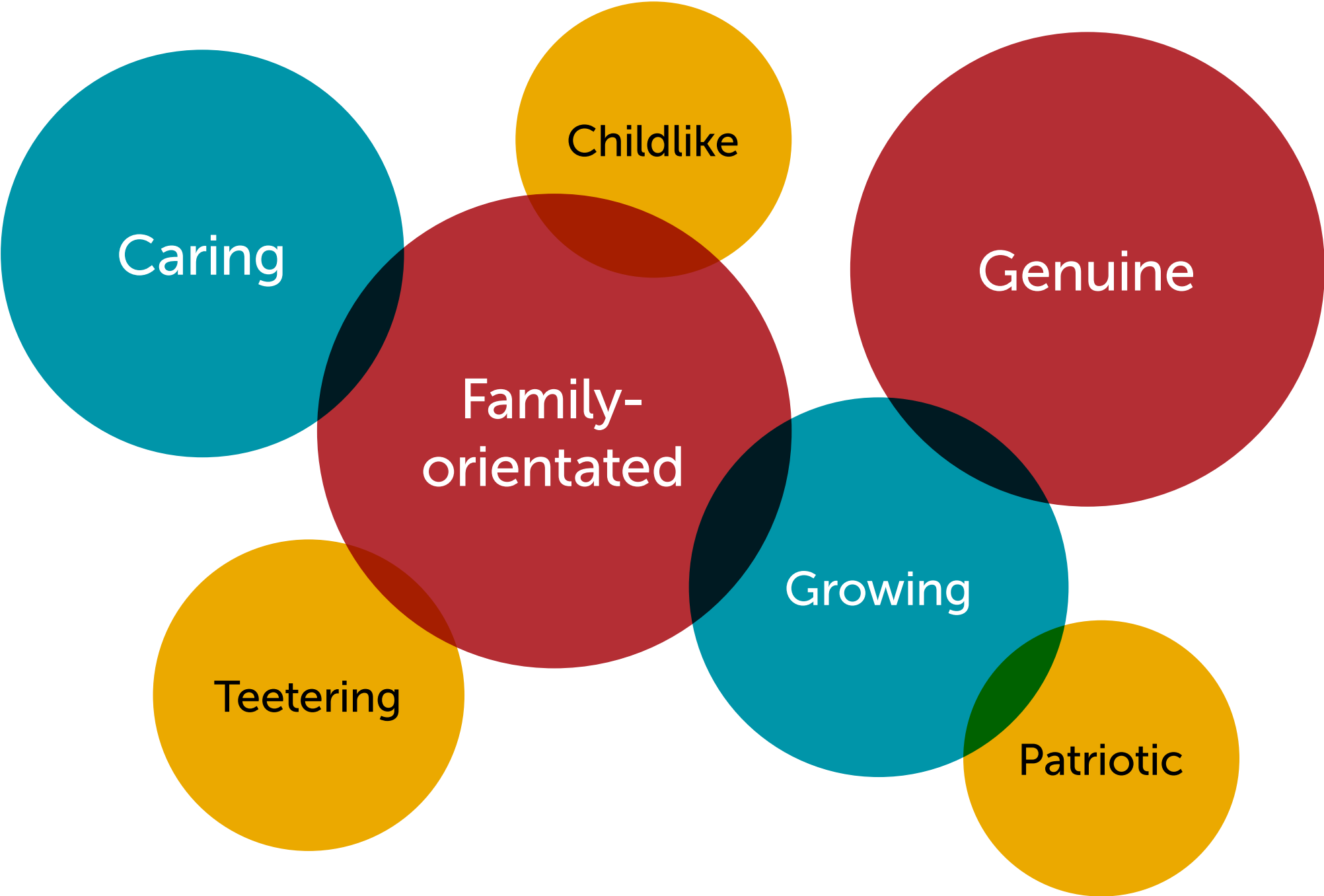
Discovery Recap



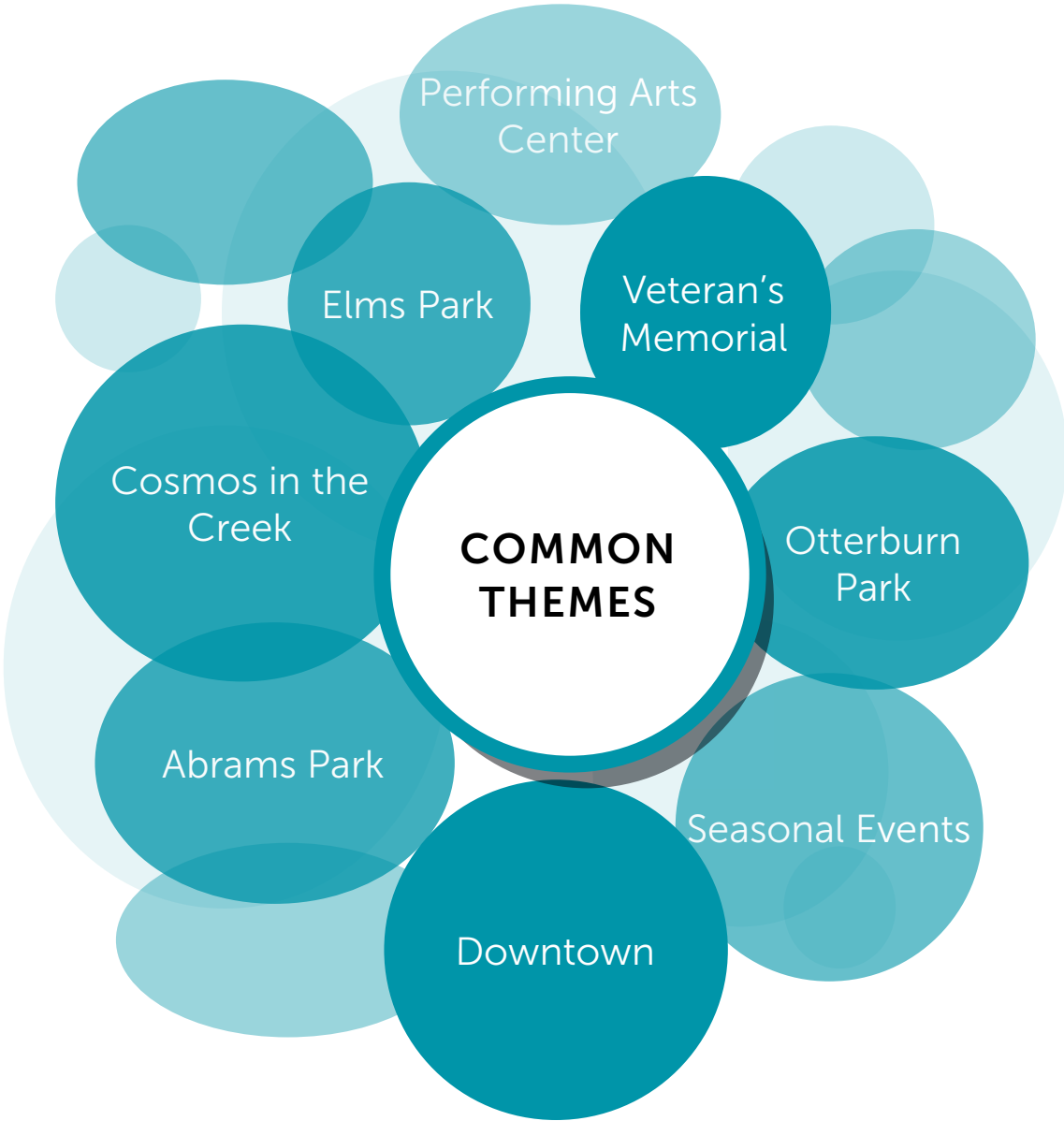
Project Goals

- Incorporate brand into sign program
- Get people from highway exits to downtown
- Improve arrival experience
- Differentiate from other cities
- Alleviate navigation challenges throughout city

ONE WORD DESCRIPTION



AN IDEAL DAY



IDEAL DAY EXCERPTS

“Have to show off the Stadium with the dragon!”

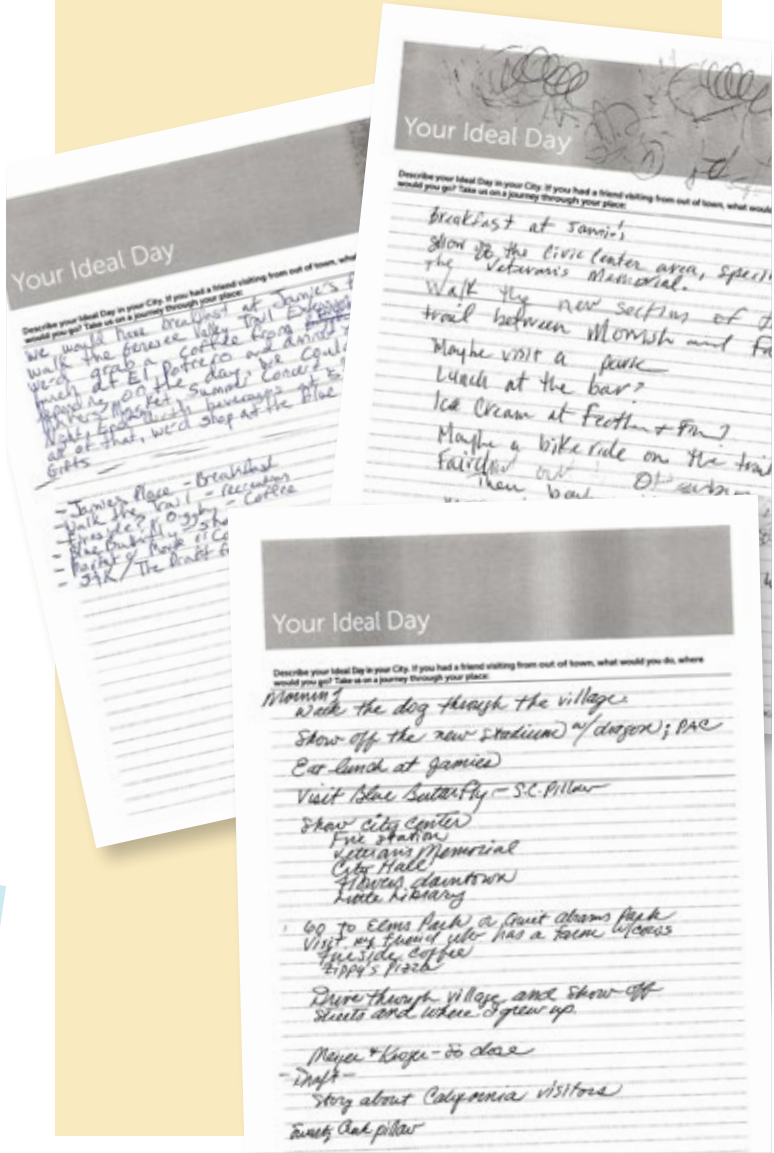
“Summer concerts and family activities”

“Walk the dog through the Village”

“Breakfast at Jamie’s Place is a must!”

Events at Holland Square are so fun!”

The Steering Committee was asked to show off Swartz Creek. If you had someone in from out of town for the day, what would you do? Where would you take them?



AUDIENCE BEHAVIORS

QUESTION	VISITOR	BUSINESS OWNER	RESIDENT
1. What places and/or activities are most attractive to...	• Elms Park • Fast food corner • Hometown days • Restaurants & bars • Stadium • Cage /fieldhouse tournaments • Trail system • Cosmos in the Creek • Summer concerts • Not many historic places (Native American burial ground just south of town)	• After work places to shop • Expressway access • Downtown events • Helpful city staff • Easy parking • Available real estate	• Schools • Parks • Affordable housing • Expressway access (easy commute) • Trails • Small town feel • Performing Arts Center • Friends & family • Services • Springbrook full service condos (seniors) • 500+ seat churches
2. What are perceived challenges related to getting to places and/or events?	• Limited signage • Safe water? • Lack of Visitor Bureau • Not identified parking in downtown (plenty of it) • Close to Flint • Not a lot to do • Location of Vet memorial and Holland Sq. • Confusing streets	• Road closures • Older buildings • Lots of competition • Traffic • Water • Restaurant limited hours • Lack of events for businesses • High county and school taxes • Signage rules (strict for businesses)	• Parking • Regional crime is high • Safe crossing Miller Rd • Not enough to do • Average schools
3. What would you want them to know about the City that they may not be aware of?	• Community is safe • Water is safe • Many restaurants to choose from • Trails • There is parking • Great infrastructure • Locations of city assets • Boundaries of city • Self aware	• Need different types of businesses • TIF/DDA incentives • Water • Events need businesses support • Not Flint • Small town vibe • Great people • Close to expressway • People would like to ride/walk to downtown • We want to help	• We do care • City is smaller than they think • Parks & trails • Performing Arts Center • Safe • Good starter homes • Great infrastructure • Fire and Police dept • Concerts in the park • Safe place to walk & ride

JOURNEY MAPPING

EXERCISES

1. Destinations

Mark the major visitor destinations. Star the top 5.

2. Vehicular Paths

Mark what you would consider to be roads that offer the BEST experience driving around town.

3. Arrival

Mark what you would consider to be the PERCEIVED points of arrival into town and downtown.

4. Public Parking

Mark public parking lots. Note any restrictions/hours, etc.

5. Pedestrian Traffic

Mark areas you would consider to have high pedestrian concentration.

6. Bike Paths

Mark what you would consider key connection points or points of interaction between bike paths and the city.



TOP VISITOR DESTINATIONS

Based on data collected from the Steering Committee, the following destinations were the most commonly marked and determined to be the top destinations in Swartz Creek.

TIER 1 (starred as a top 5 destination by both groups)

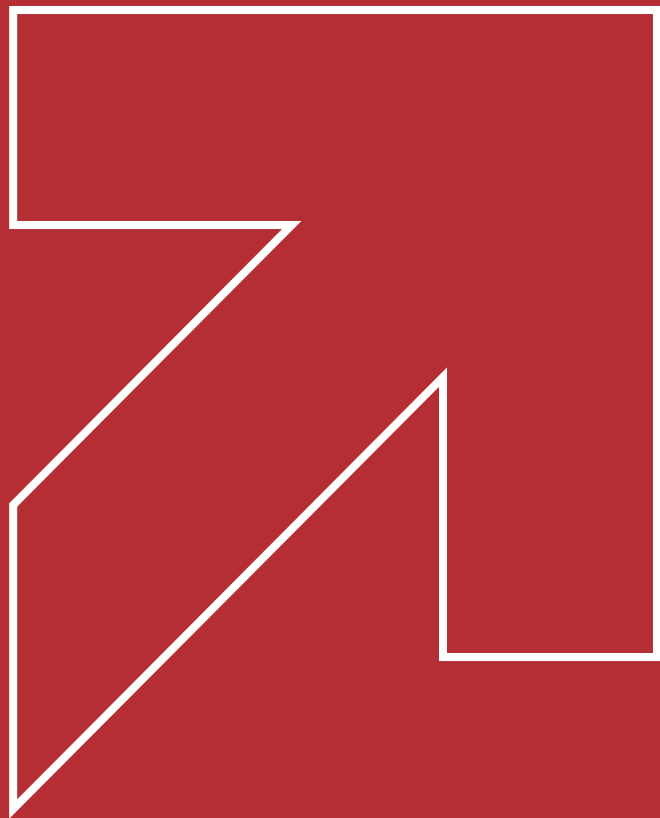
- Elms Park
- High School/Performing Arts Center

TIER 2 (starred as a top 5 destination by one of the groups, but not both)

- Downtown/Holland Square
- Cage Fieldhouse
- Otterburn Park
- Veteran's Memorial
- Civic Center/Amphitheater

TIER 3 (listed but not starred by either group)

- Abrams Park
- Cosmos in the Creek
- Kincaid Field
- Trails
- Carriage Plaza/Western Business District
- Art Gallery



Analysis & Recommendations

Current Challenges

Signage is one of the **first physical interactions** a person has with a place and will make an **impression**—either positive or negative—to visitors, residents, & potential business owners.

- How to get people from highway exits into Downtown.
- Inconsistent nomenclature.
- Lack of awareness of events and things to do.
- Lack of signage or existing is too small.
- City assets not identified or visually inconsistent.
- Perceived lack of parking (public parking not identified).
- Pedestrian comfort & safety crossing roads.



Nomenclature

a set or system of names or terms, as those used in a particular science or art, by an individual or community, etc.

—*dictionary.com*

A comprehensive wayfinding program should include nomenclature that is consistent from sign to sign and should be used across all communication media, including city and destination websites, printed materials, and verbal directions from employees and staff.

A consistent nomenclature system is critical in creating a cohesive and connective experience from planning a trip to your city to engaging with its physical environment.

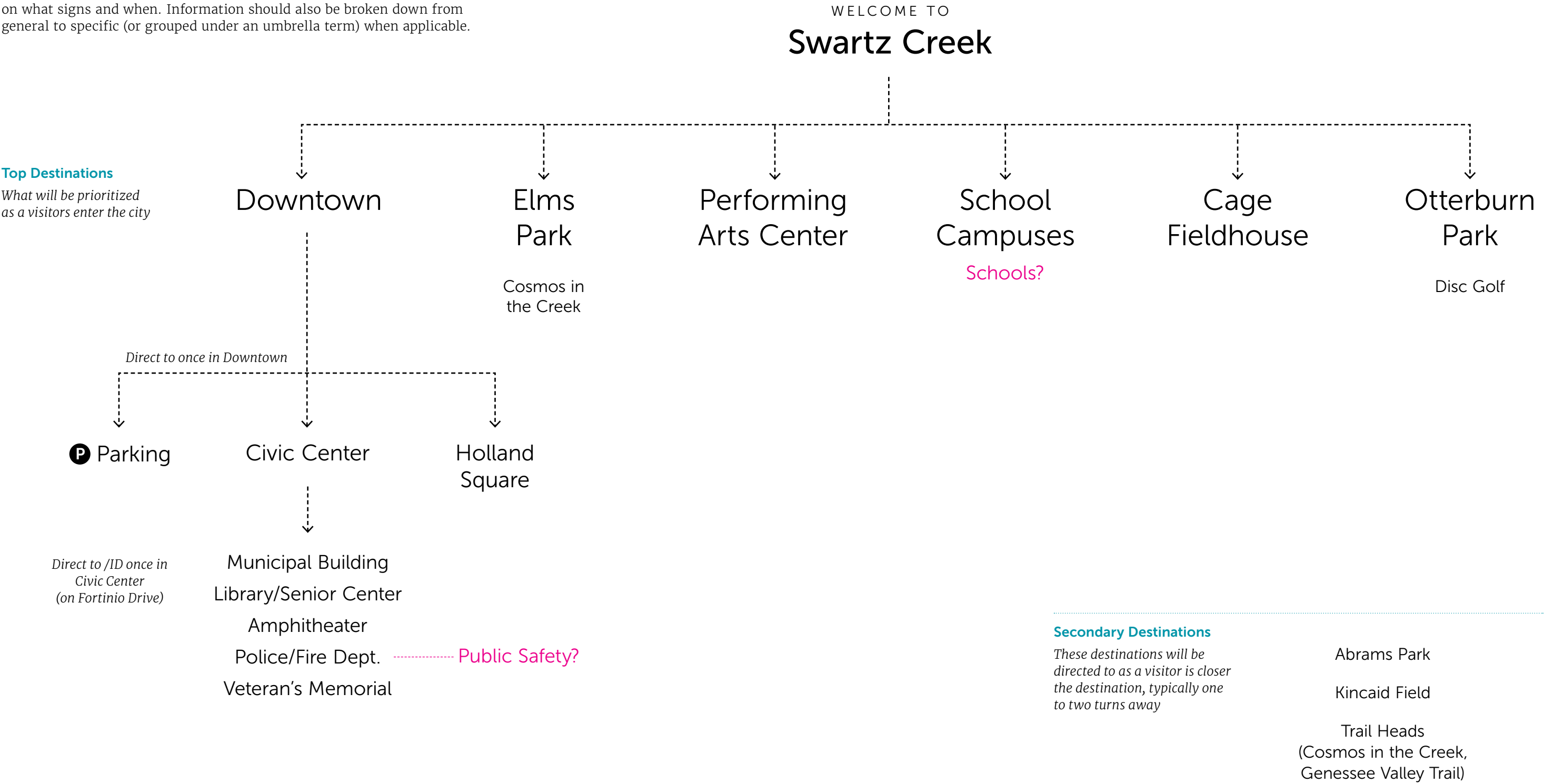


Information Hierarchy & Nomenclature

To accommodate the messaging limitations on vehicular signs, a hierarchy must be established to prioritize what information is provided on what signs and when. Information should also be broken down from general to specific (or grouped under an umbrella term) when applicable.

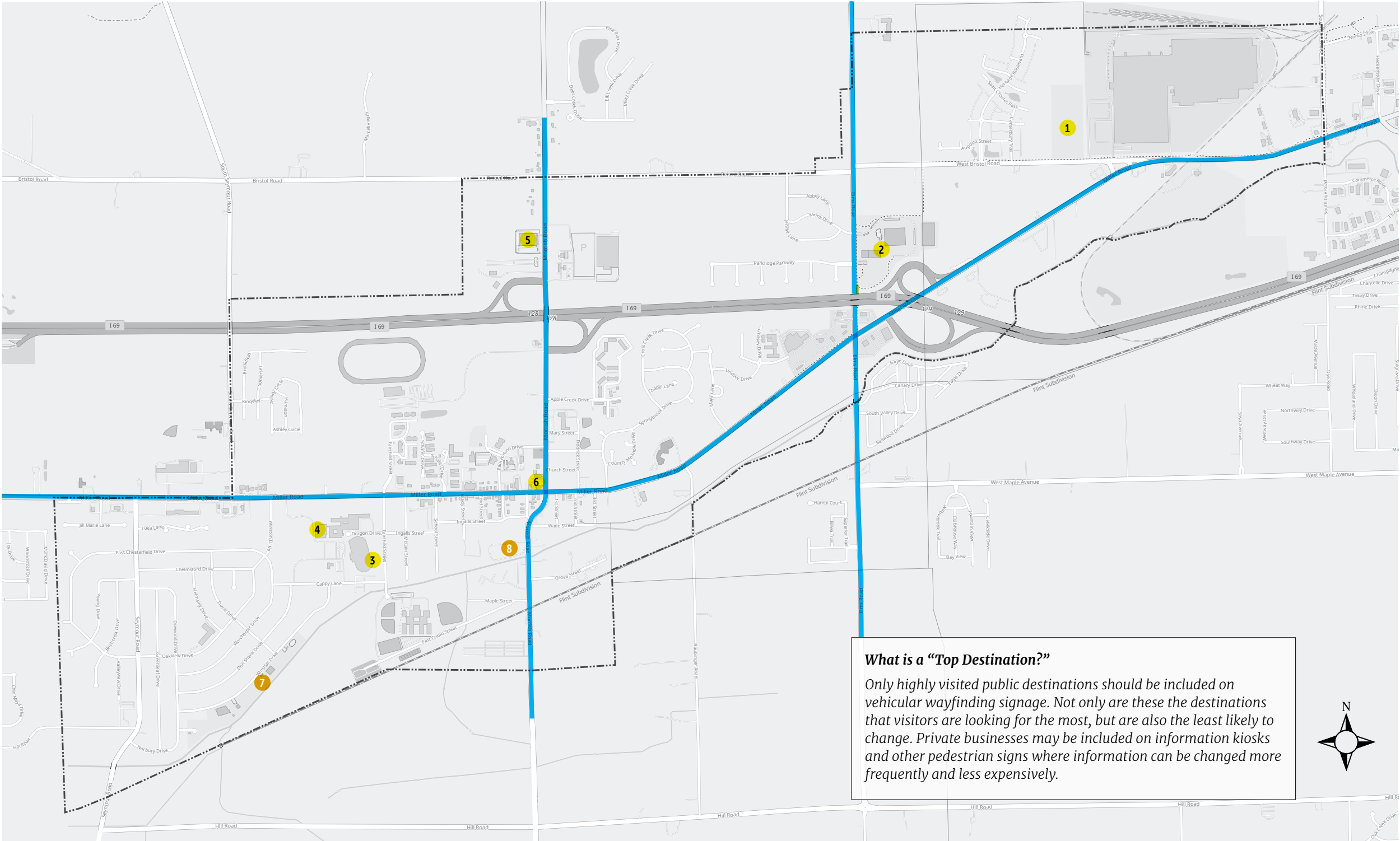
Top Destinations

What will be prioritized as a visitors enter the city



*Nomenclature for directional message should be as short as possible. Full names can be on identification signs at the destination entrance (as long as they clearly relate to the directional message).

Top Destinations



TOP DESTINATIONS

Priority

- 1 Otterburn Park
- 2 Elms Park
- 3 Schools
- 4 Performing Arts Center
- 5 Cage Fieldhouse
- 6 Downtown

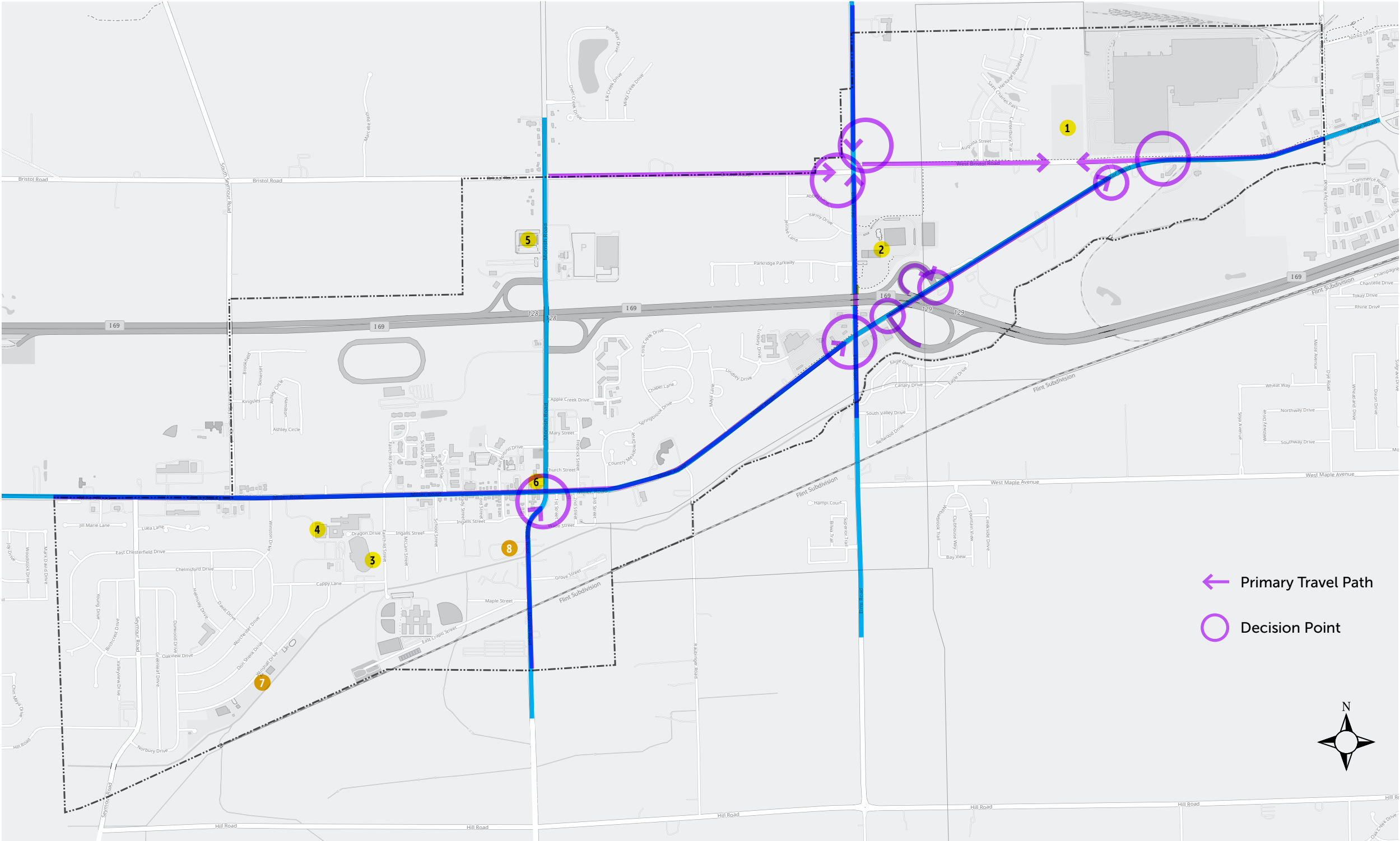
Secondary

- 7 Abrams Park
- 8 Kincaid Field

MAP KEY

- City Border
- Major (Best) Roads
- Bike Trail - Existing
- Bike Trail - Future
- Trail Head

Vehicular Travel Paths / Otterburn Park



TOP DESTINATIONS

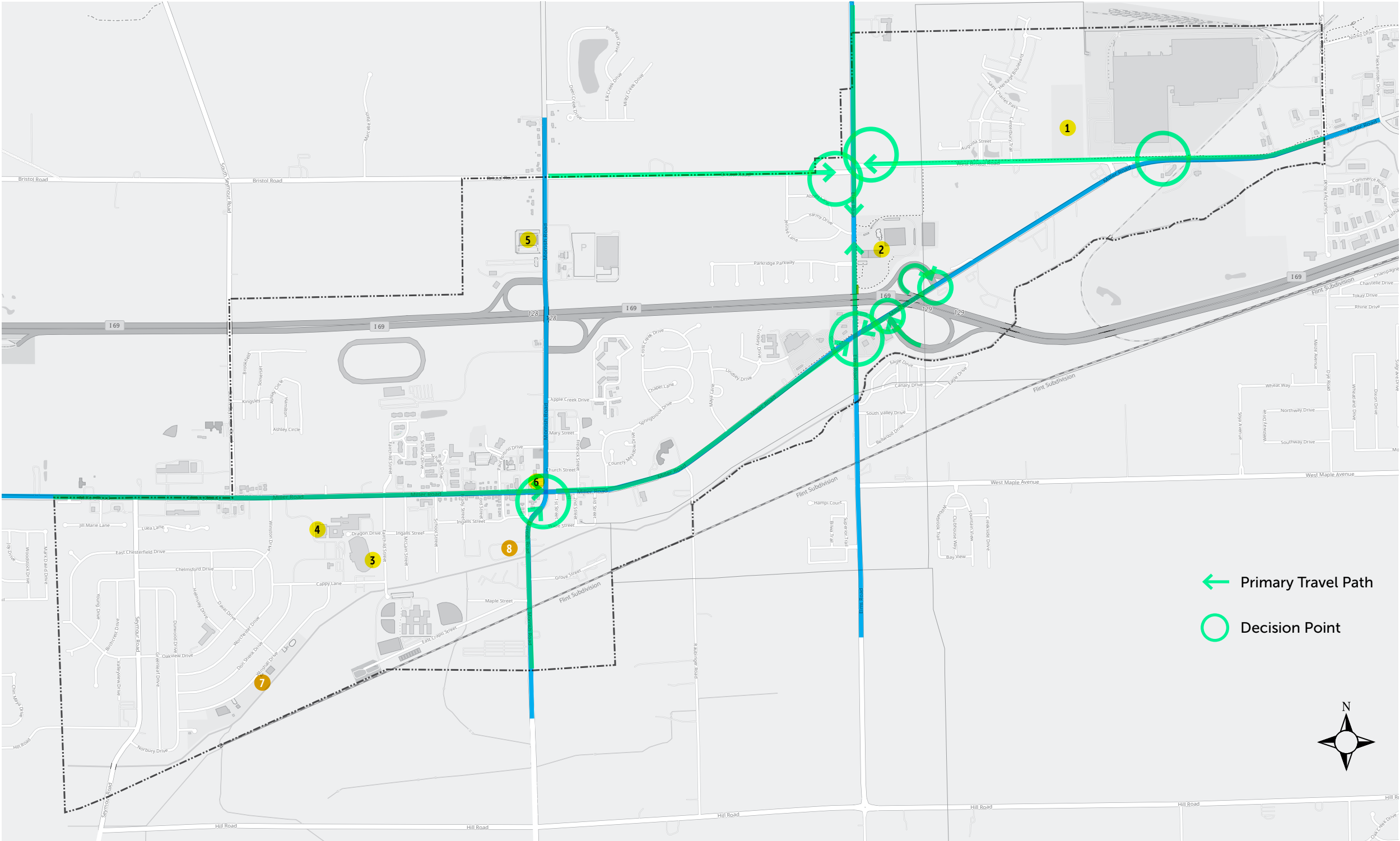
Priority

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- 6 Downtown

Secondary

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Vehicular Travel Paths / Elms Park



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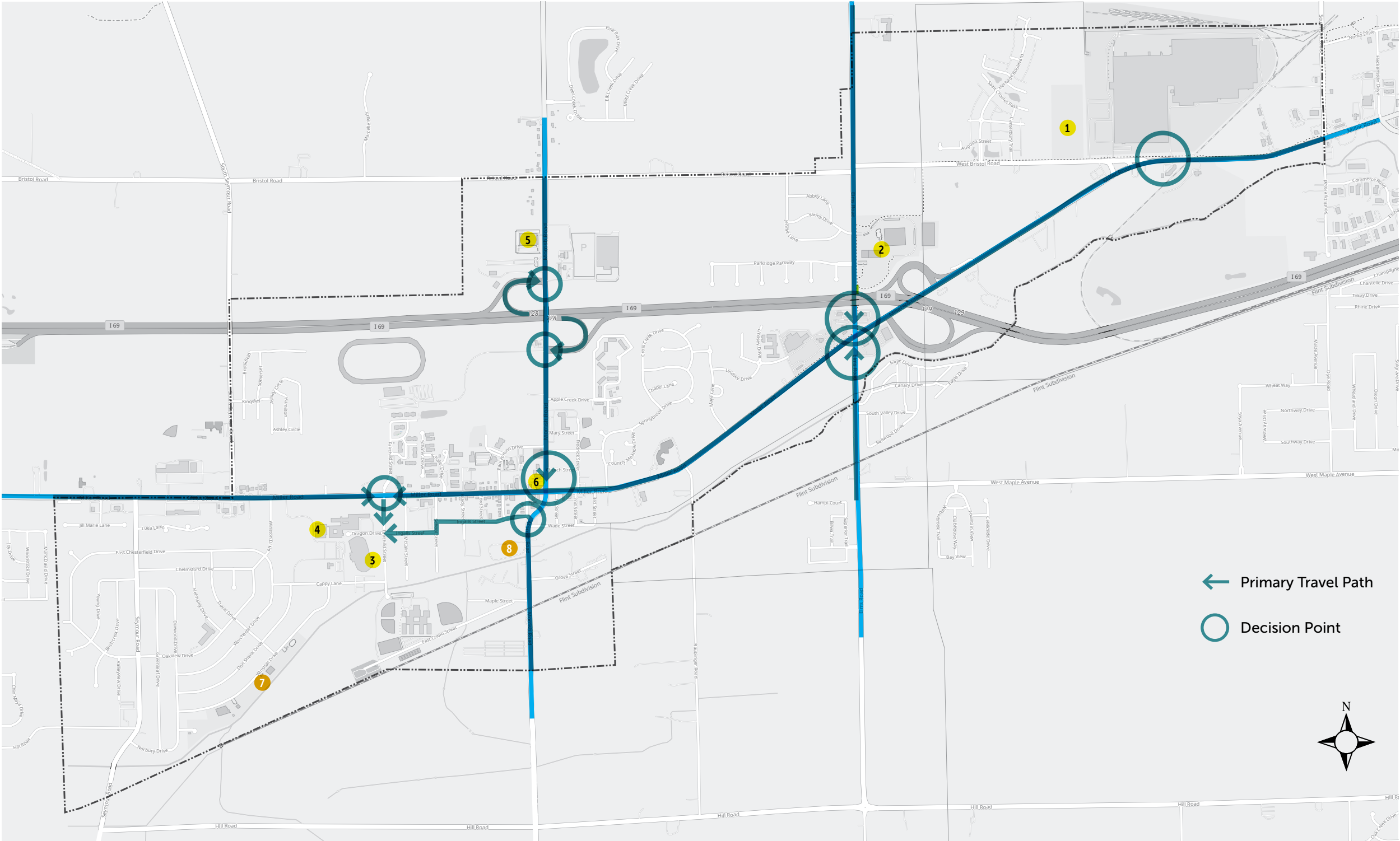
Secondary

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Vehicular Travel Paths / Schools



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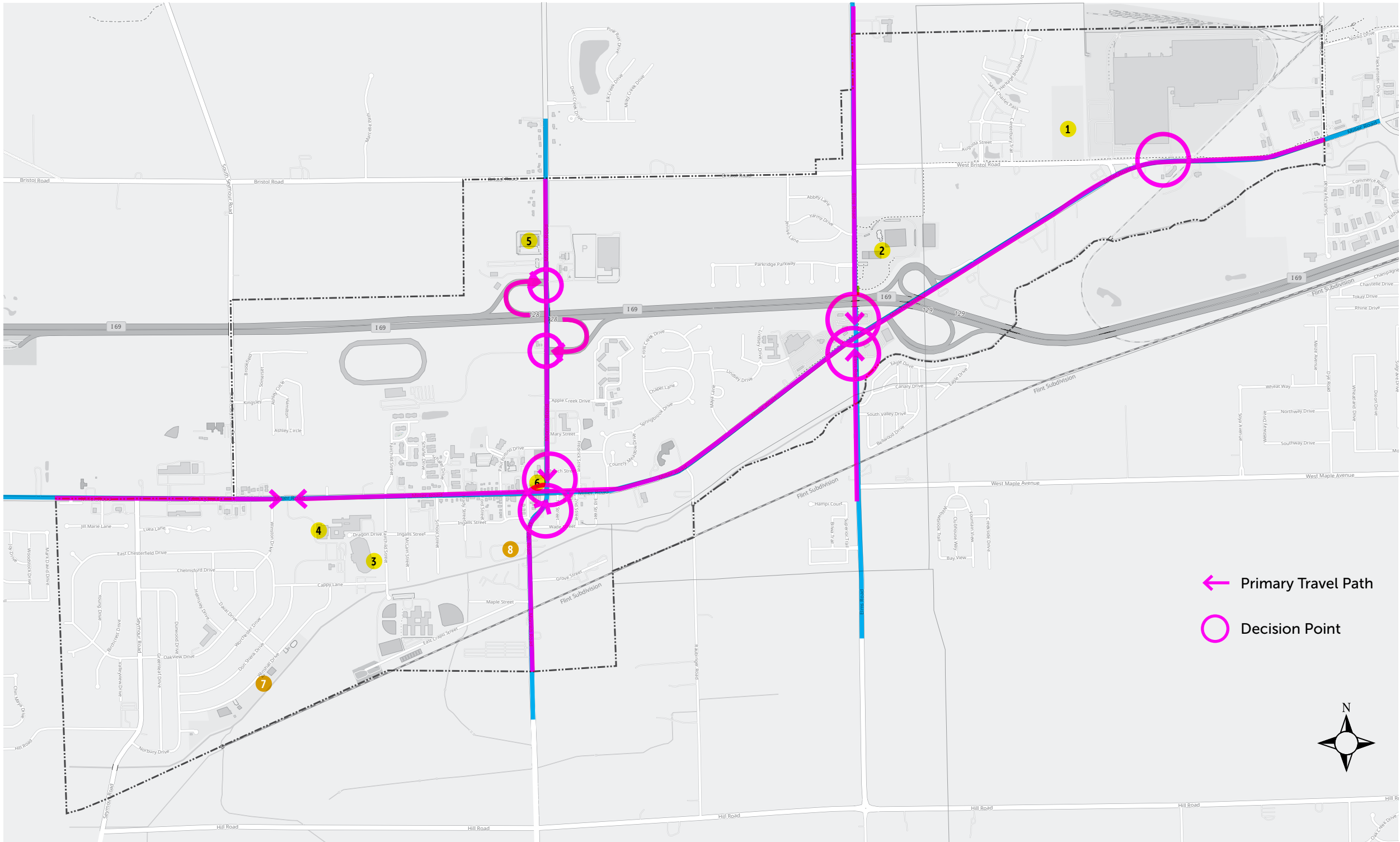
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Vehicular Travel Paths / Performing Arts Center



TOP DESTINATIONS

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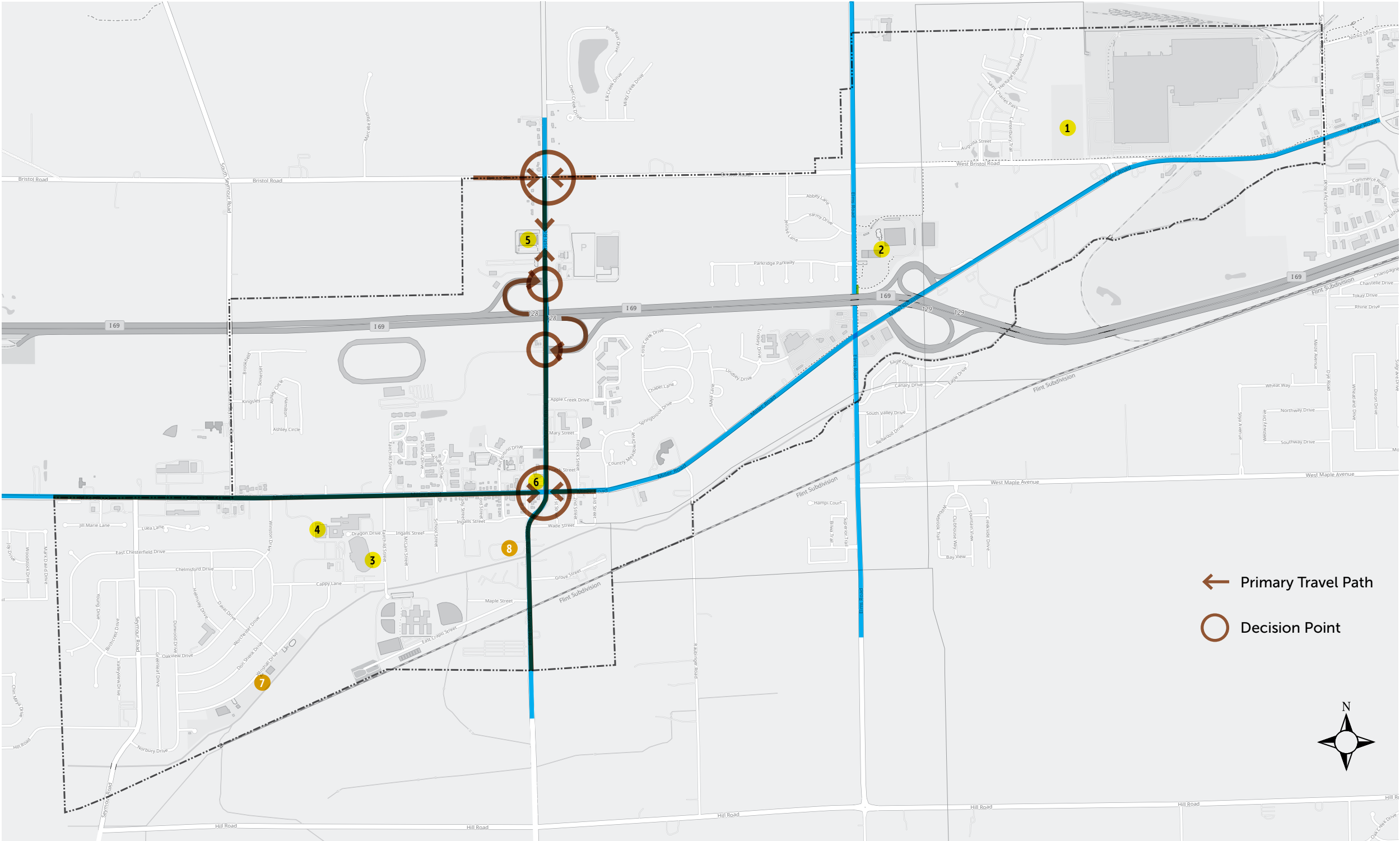
Secondary

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- ★ Trail Head

Vehicular Travel Paths / Cage Fieldhouse



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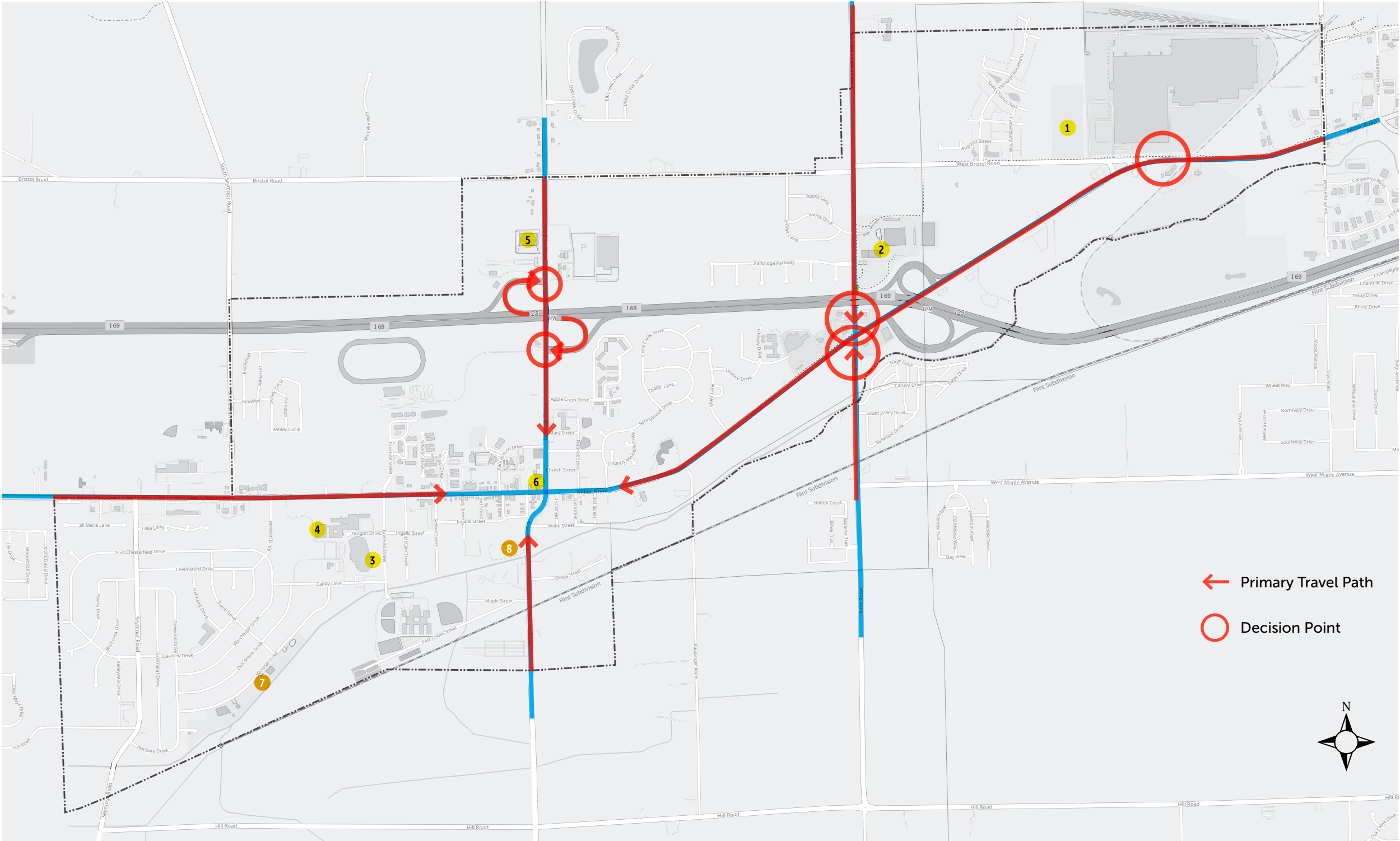
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Vehicular Travel Paths / **Downtown**



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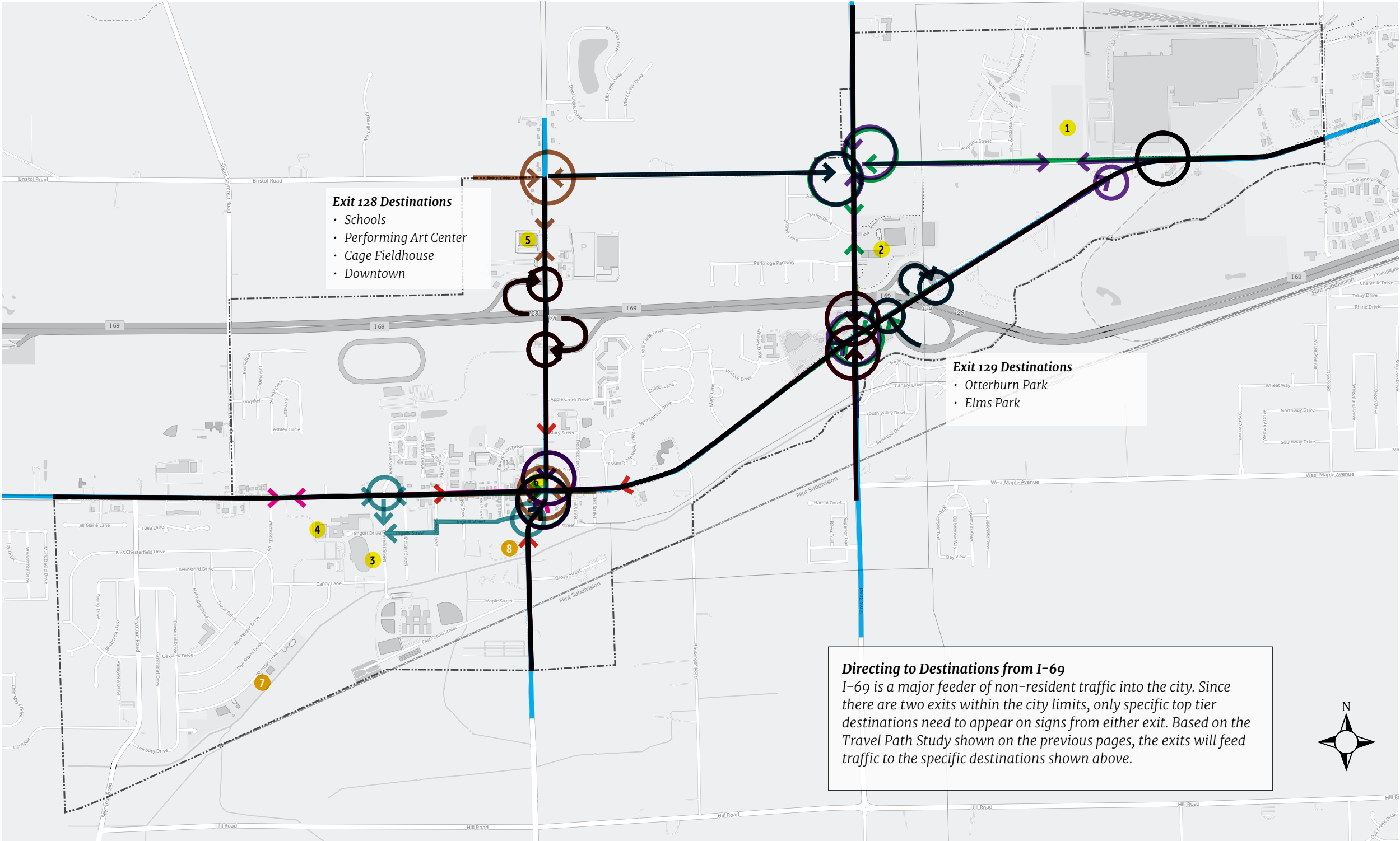
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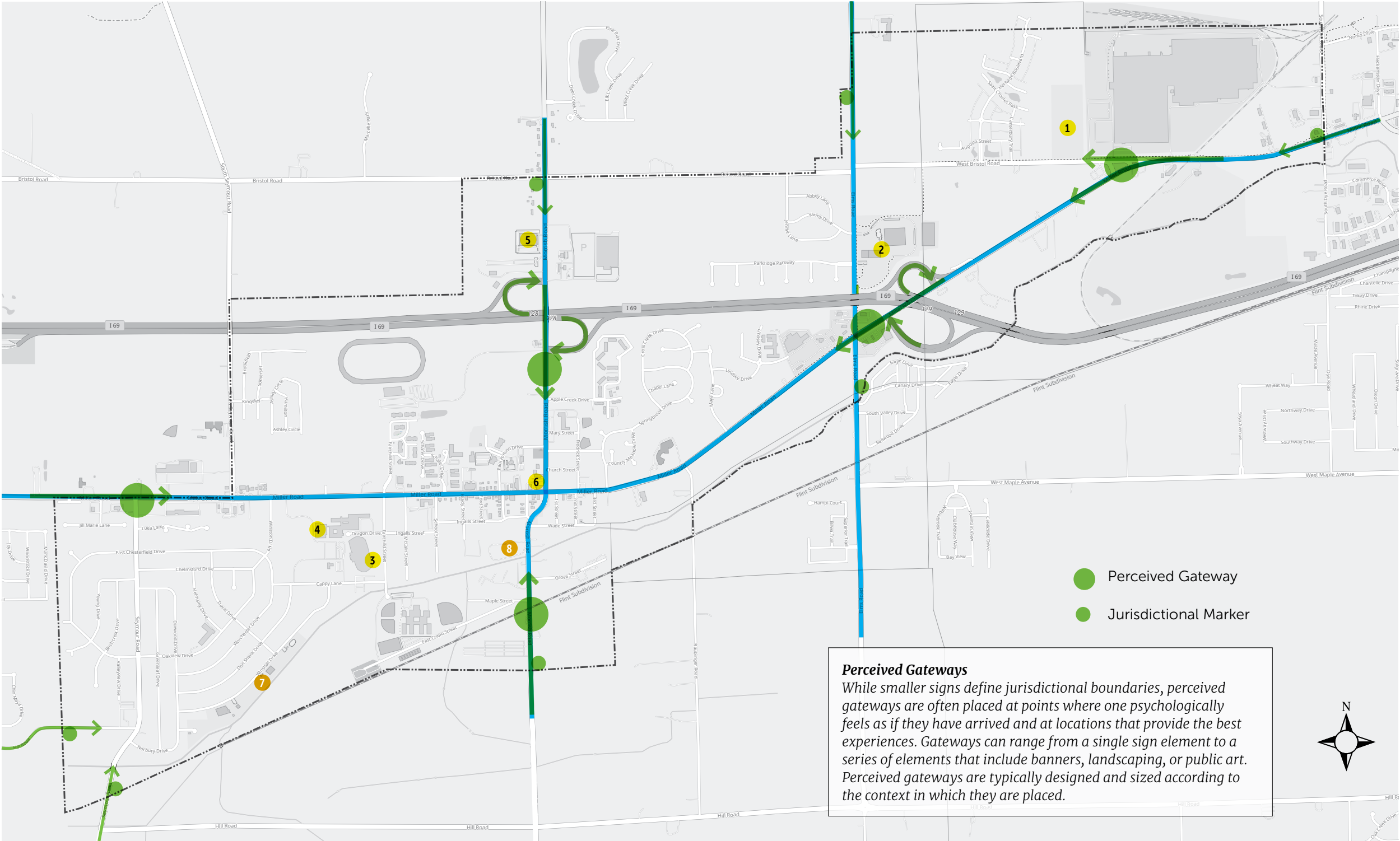
MAP KEY

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- Trail Head

Vehicular Travel Paths / Comprehensive



Vehicular Travel Paths / City Gateways



TOP DESTINATIONS

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- 2 Elms Park
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MAP KEY

Vehicular Travel Paths / City Gateways



Vehicular Travel Paths / City Gateways



TOP DESTINATIONS

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Vehicular Travel Paths / City Gateways



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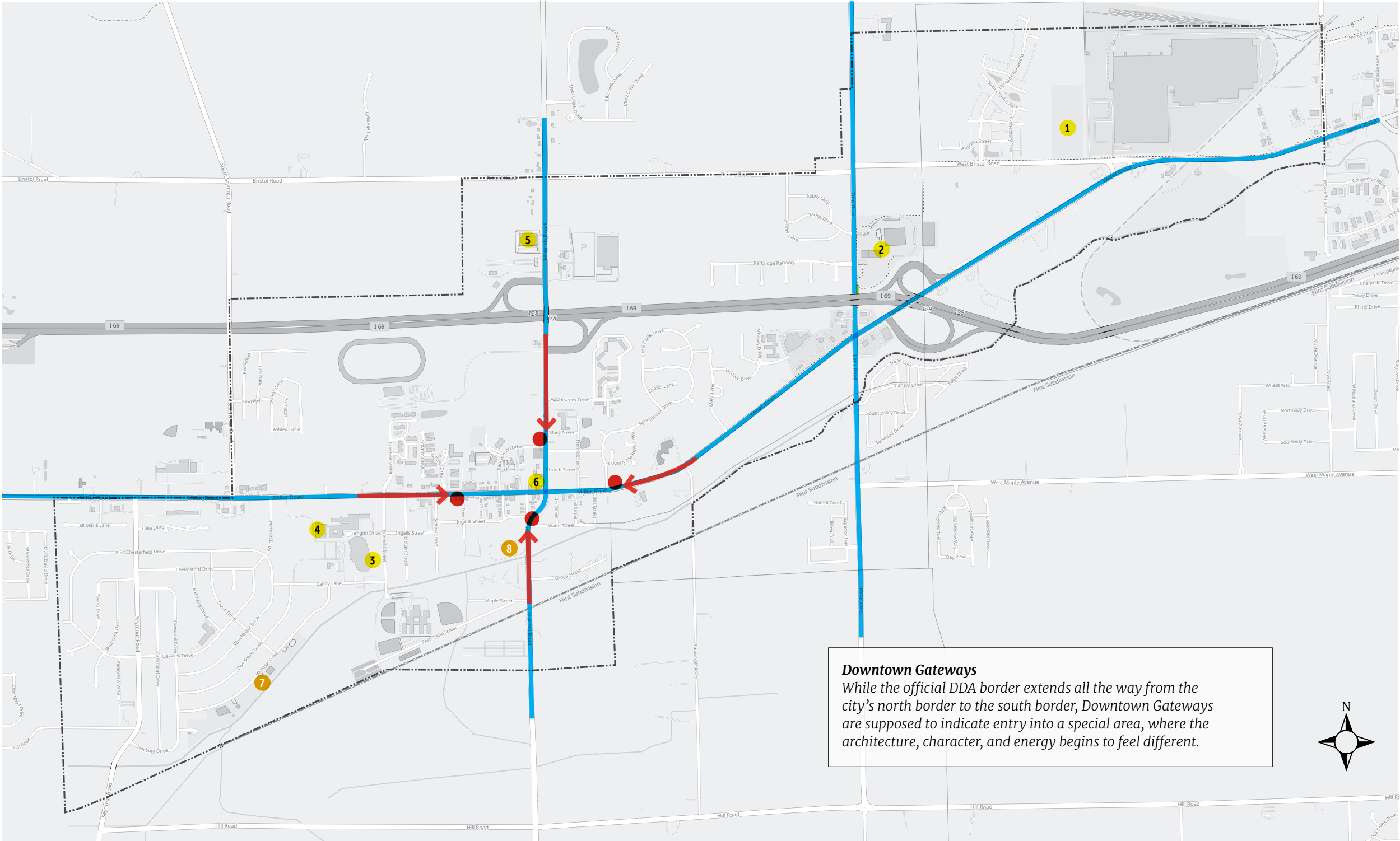


Closer to the tracks poses a few challenges with placing a significant gateway: 1) It is cluttered with utilities, signs, & houses and 2) it is close to the jurisdictional border, creating a potential for redundancy.



We recommend placing the gateway closer to the jurisdictional border, as it allows for more space and a nicer backdrop.

Vehicular Travel Paths / Downtown Gateways



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Secondary

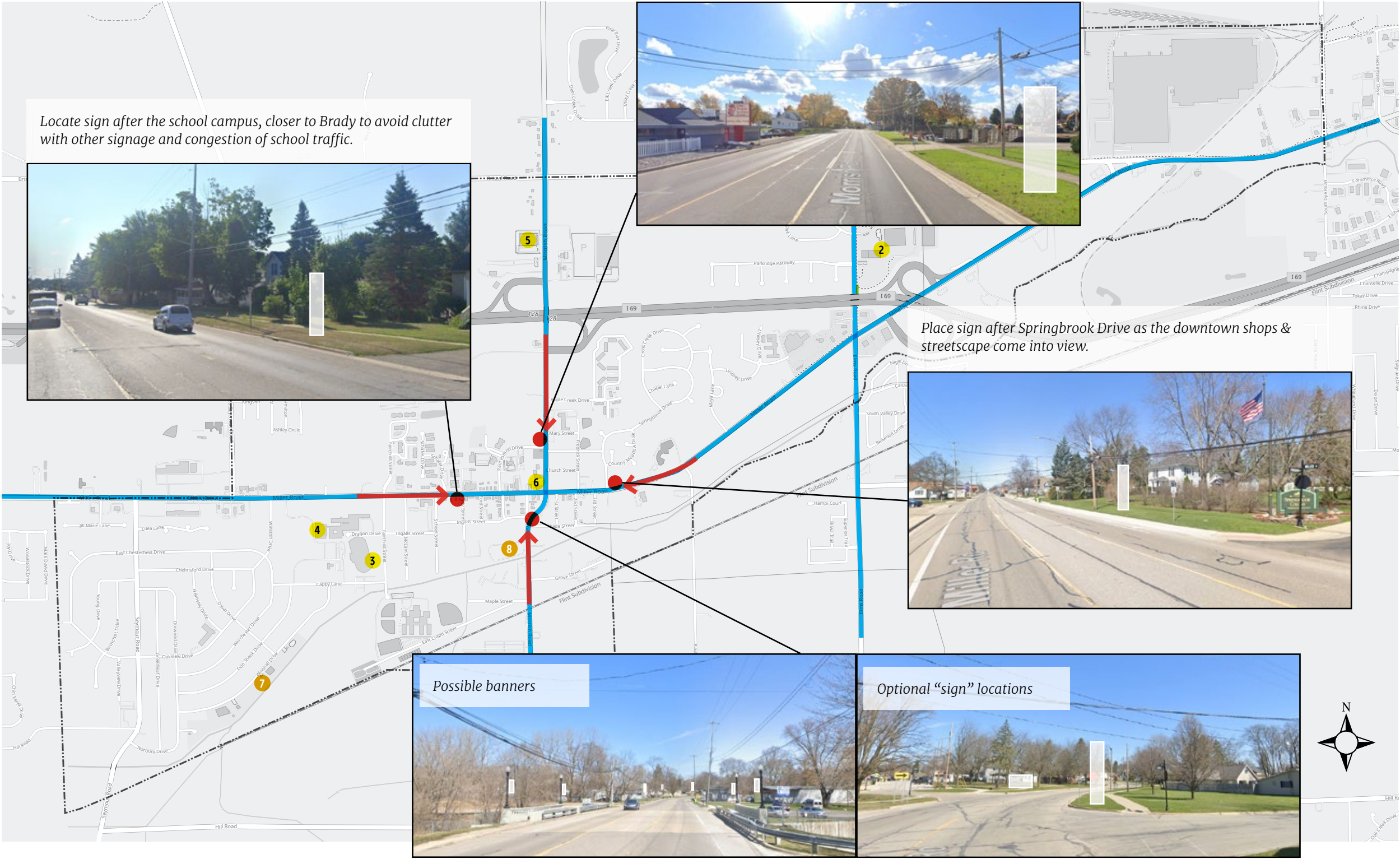
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MAP KEY

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- Major (Best) Roads
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Vehicular Travel Paths / Downtown Gateways

Place sign just before new house on corner of Morrish & Paul Fortino Dr. This will allow for a Civic Center Sign at Paul Fortino Dr.



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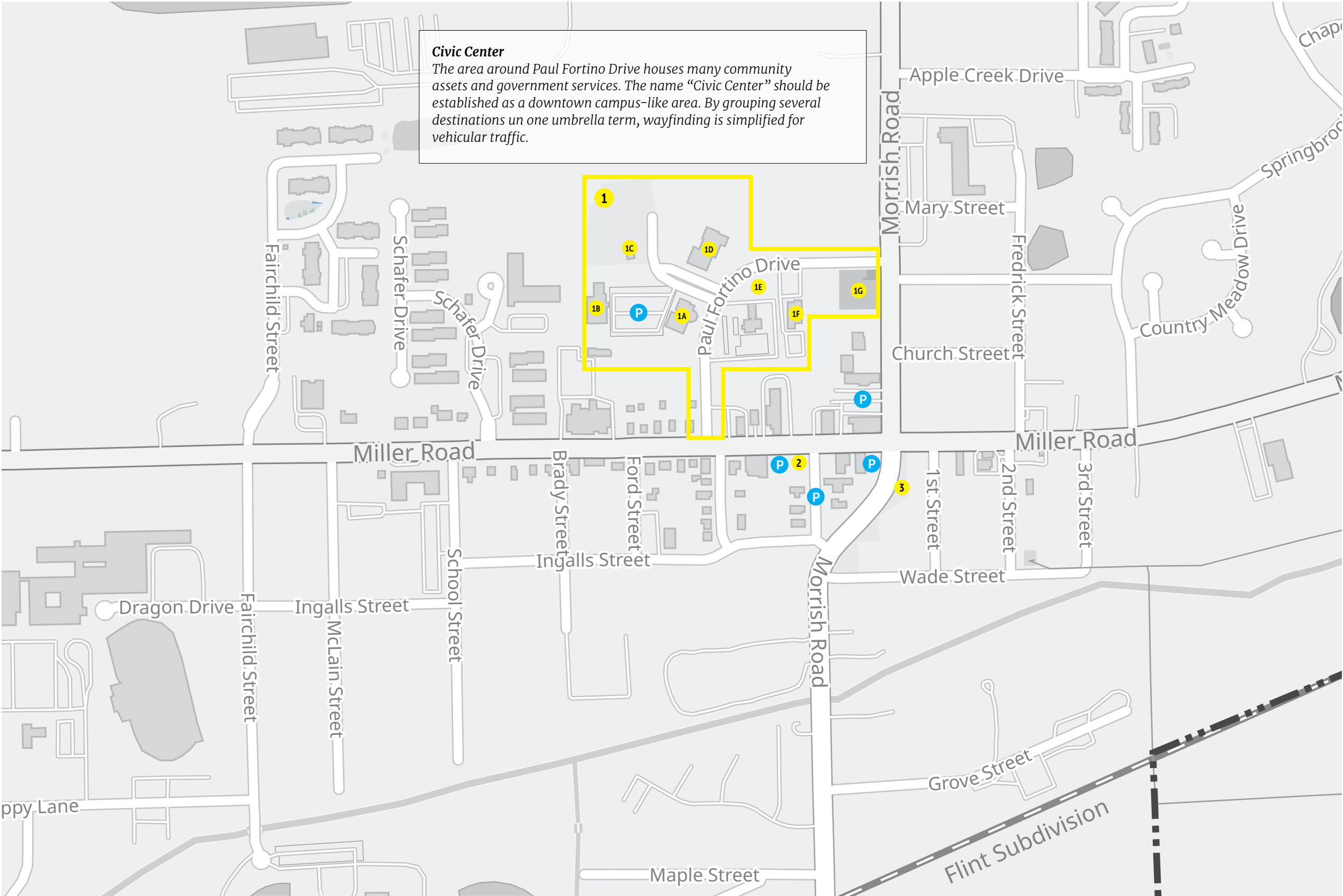
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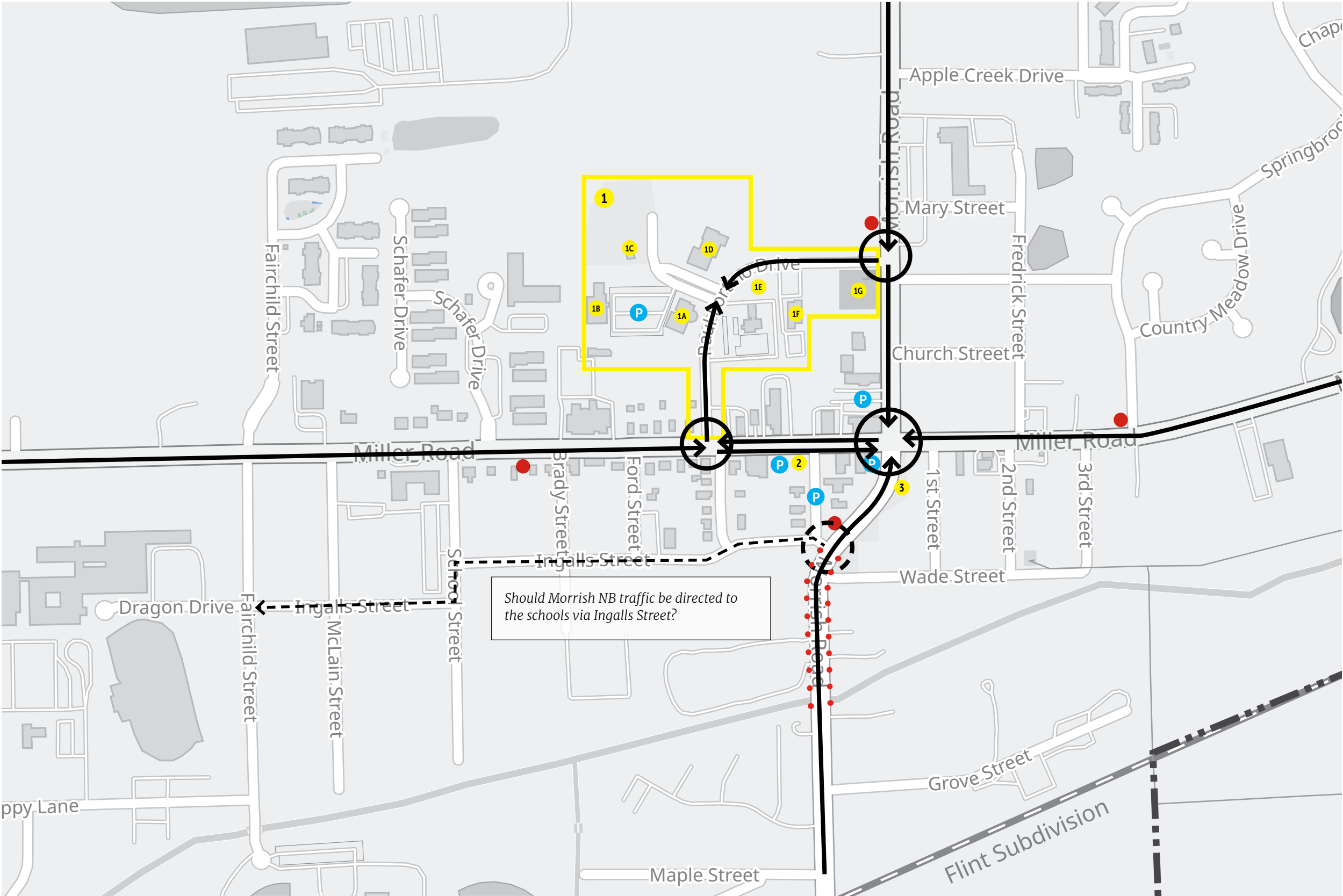
- City Border
- Major (Best) Roads
- Bike Trail - Existing
- Bike Trail - Future
- ★ Trail Head

Downtown / Top Destinations



- DOWNTOWN DESTINATIONS**
- 1 Civic Center
 - 1A Municipal Building
 - 1B Library/Senior Center
 - 1C Amphitheater
 - 1D Public Safety (Fire & Police)
 - 1E Veteran's Memorial
 - 1F Post Office
 - 1G Cemetery
 - 2 Holland Square
 - 3 Bicentennial Park
 - P Public Parking

Downtown / Travel Paths



DOWNTOWN DESTINATIONS

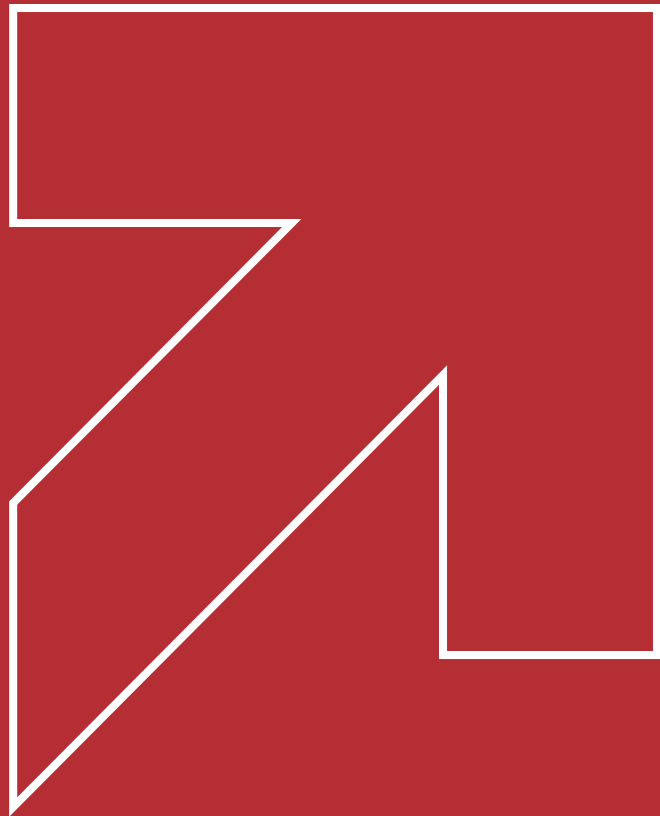
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KEY

- Downtown Gateway
- ← Primary Vehicular Path
- Decision Point

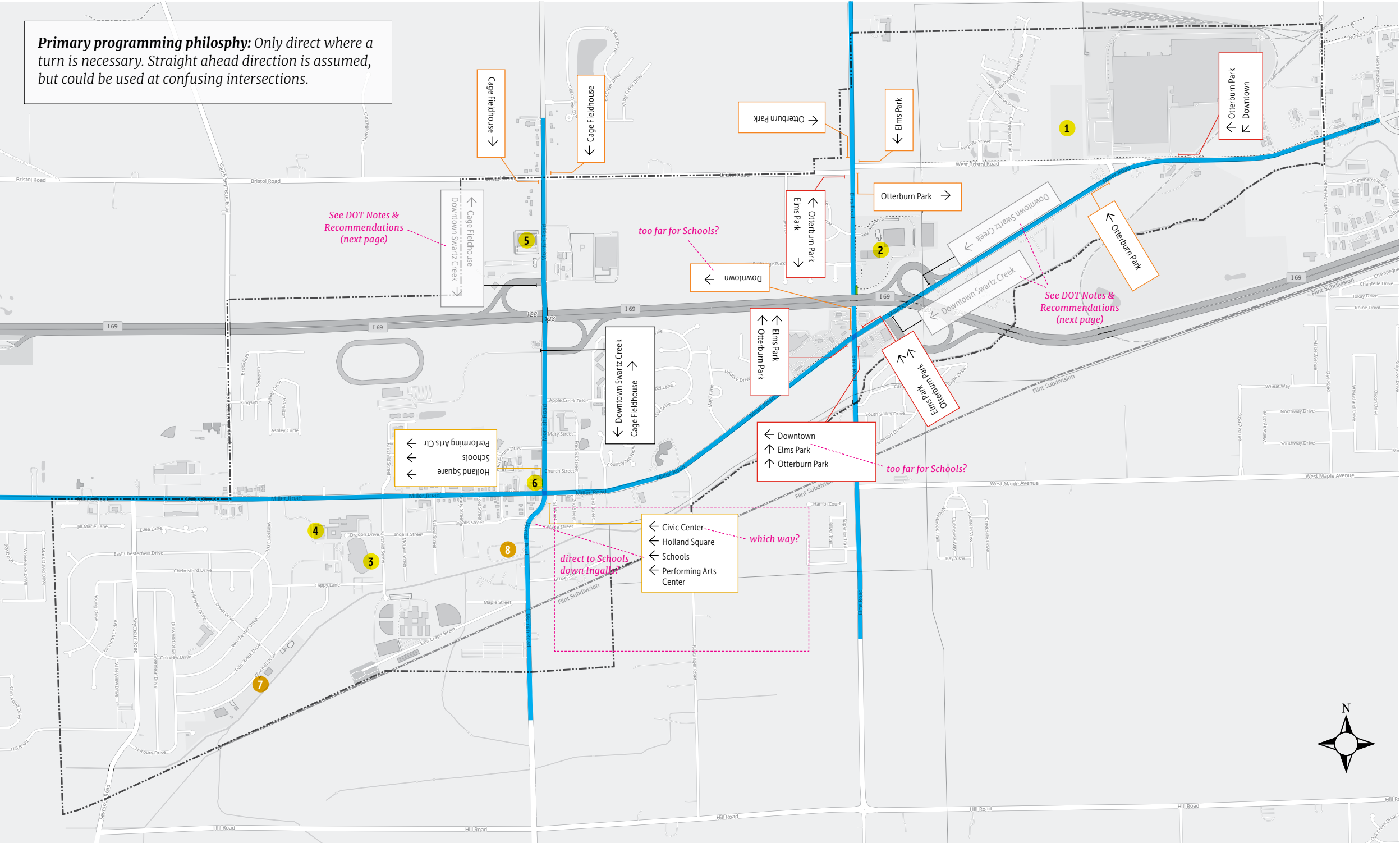
Sign Program Guiding Principles

1. Direct to Downtown from the highway exits by considering Downtown a top city-wide destination.
2. Distinguish Downtown with placemaking and it's own sub-family of signs
3. Establish the Civic Center as a specialized Downtown destination that holds numerous assets via placemaking/signage (and other media).
4. Update all Civic Center signage to match or be a sub-family of the sign program.
5. Clearly identify Public Parking.
6. Establish consistent nomenclature on signage (and all other media).
7. Create a sense of arrival with gateways and landscaping elements. Distinguish between perceived gateways and jurisdictional markers (jurisdictional markers may still be designed to look like they are part of the family).
8. Clearly identify trailheads (including Genessee Valley Trail and Cosmos in the Creek). Include trail directional signage.
9. Establish standard park signage as part of the city sign program.
10. Strategically place informational kiosks at high traffic pedestrian areas to communicate events. Kiosks may include a directory and map of businesses.
11. Distinguish neighborhoods with placemaking elements and/or signs.



Preliminary Programming

Preliminary Programming / Vehicular Wayfinding



TOP DESTINATIONS

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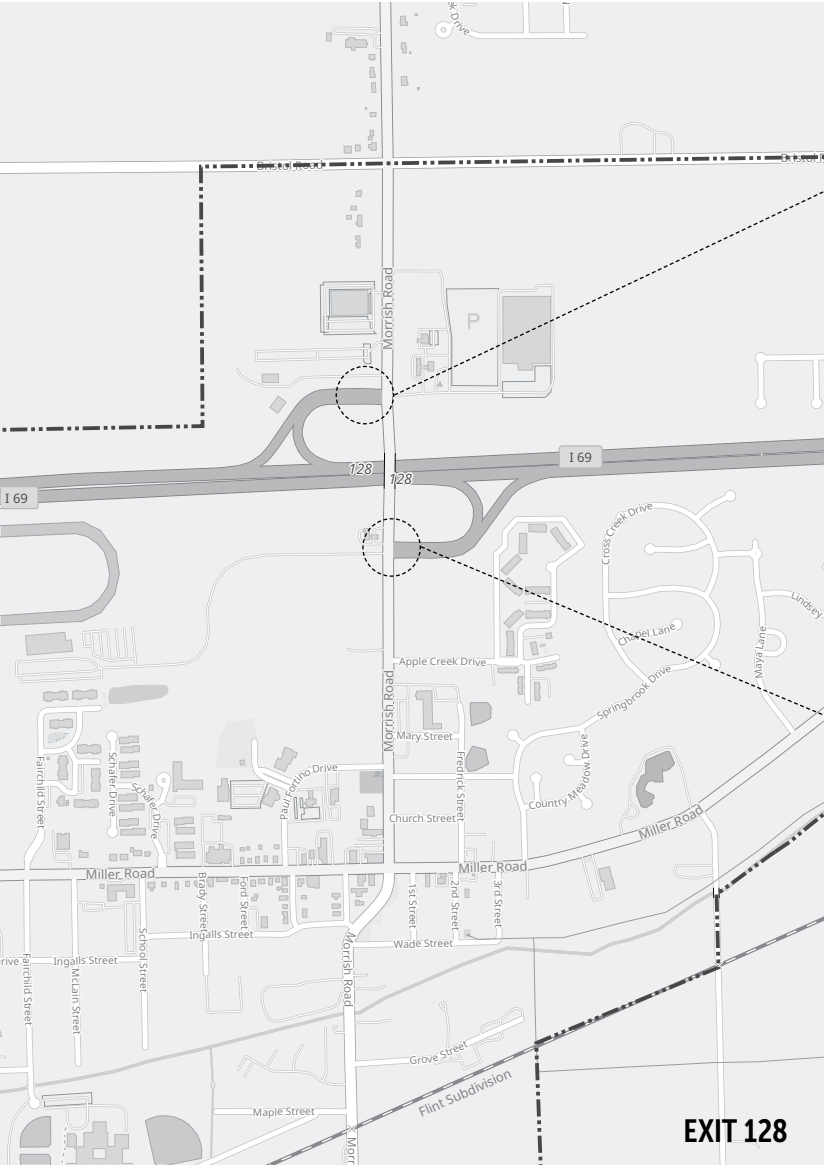
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Programming Notes / DOT Notes & Recommendations

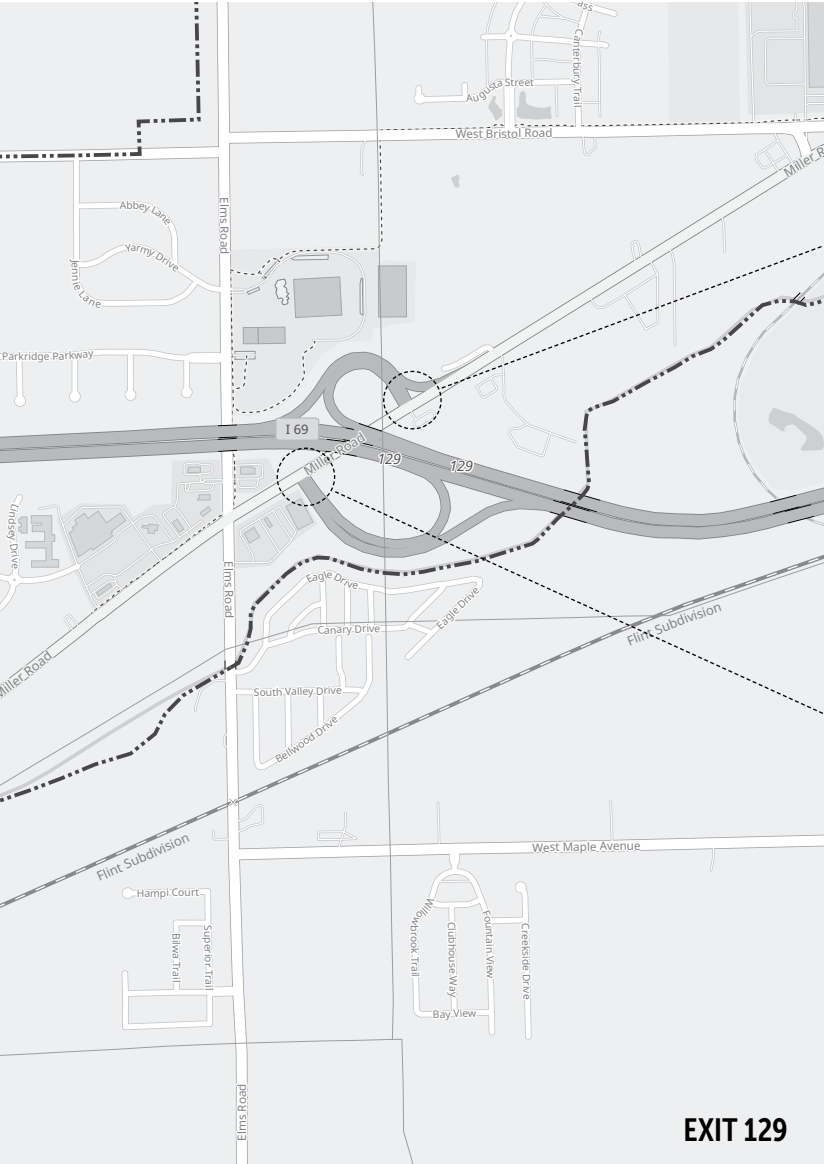


Custom signage coming off highway exit ramps can be challenging. DOT is extremely strict with where (or if) you can place signs on their property. On the ramp itself is not allowed and across the street is not ideal due to visual clutter, traffic, and readability due to distance. You may, however, work with your local DOT to update messages.

Discussion & coordination with DOT will have to occur to determine which messages must remain on the existing signs.



Programming Notes / DOT Notes & Recommendations

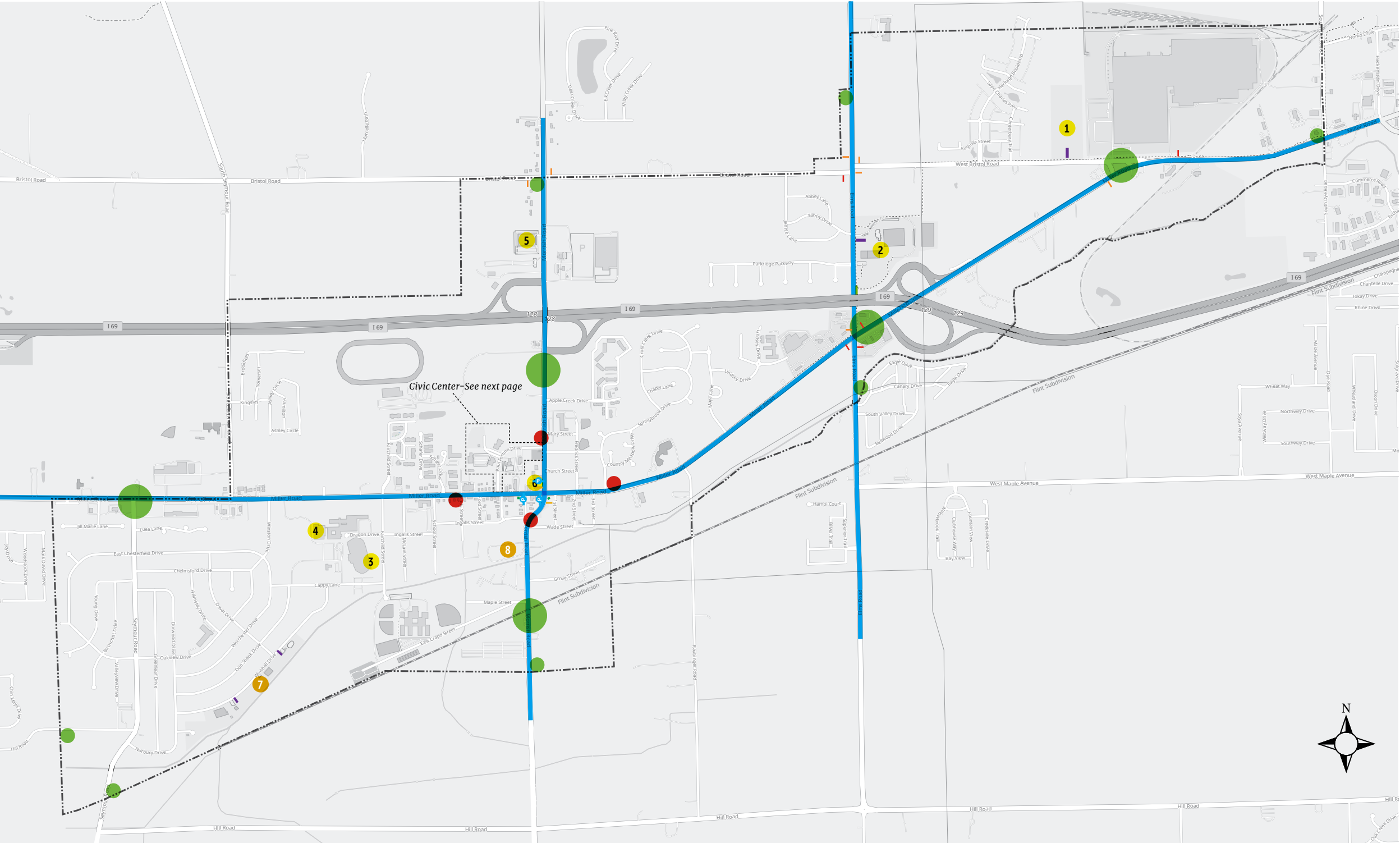


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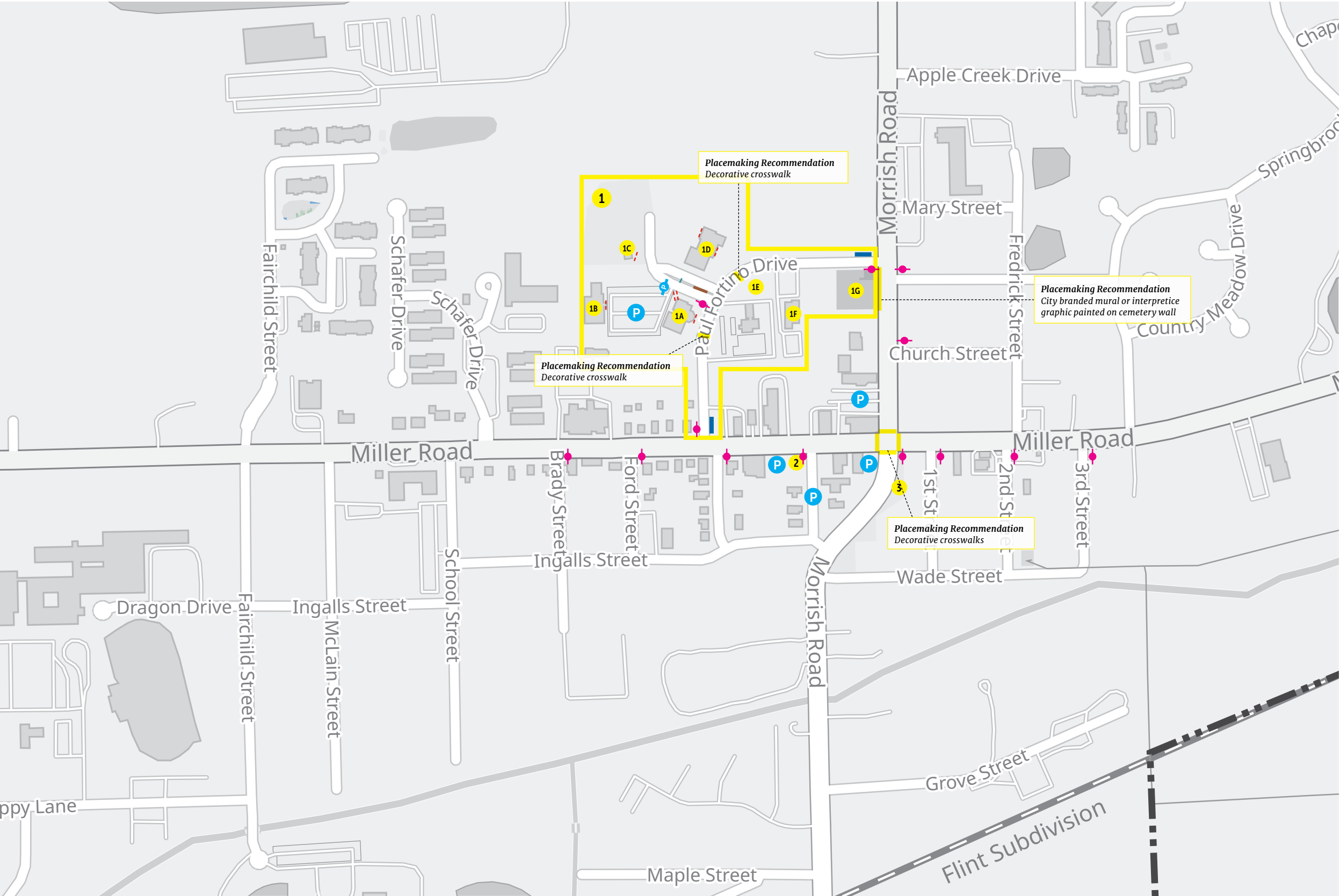
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Preliminary Programming / Location Plans / Vehicular Traffic



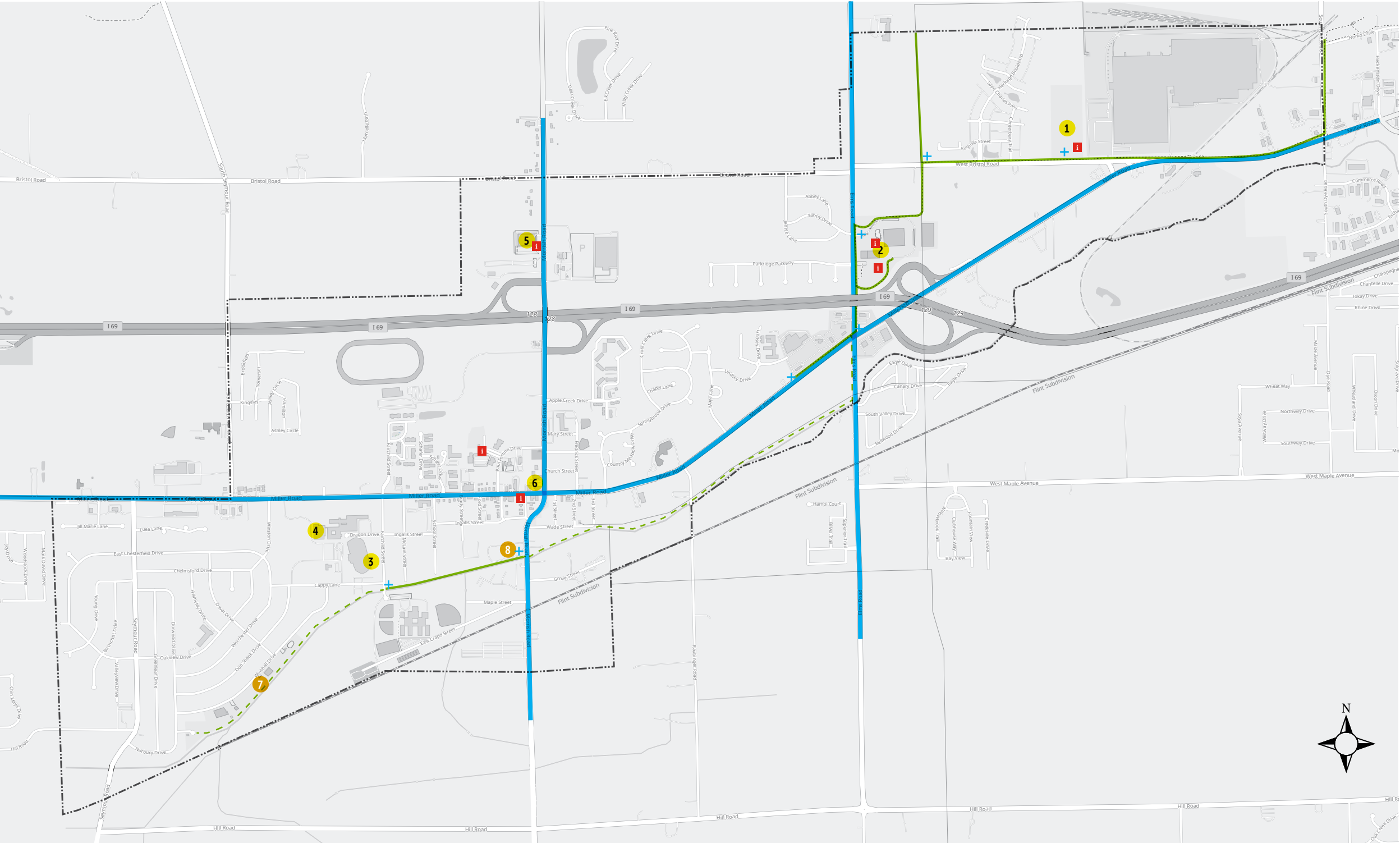
Preliminary Programming / Location Plans / Vehicular Traffic (Civic Center & Street ID Add-On)



VEHICULAR SIGN TYPES

- CITY-WIDE
 - City Gateway
 - Jurisdictional Marker
 - Vehicular Directional
 - Trailblazer
 - Park ID
- DOWNTOWN
 - Downtown Gateway
 - Downtown Vehicular Directional
 - Public Parking ID
 - Downtown Park/Public Space ID
 - Downtown Street Sign Add-On
- CIVIC CENTER
 - Civic Center Primary ID
 - Civic Center Secondary ID
 - Civic Center Directional
 - Civic Center Facility ID (wall-mounted)
- NEIGHBORHOOD
 - Neighborhood ID (not shown)

Preliminary Programming / Location Plans / Pedestrian & Trails



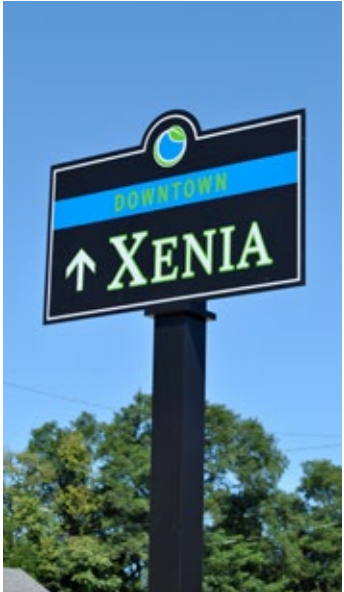
PEDESTRIAN/TRAIL SIGN TYPES

- Information Kiosk
- Trail Directional

Sign Type Hierarchy

CITY-WIDE	DOWNTOWN	CIVIC CENTER	PEDESTRIAN/TRAILS
● City Gateway Swartz Creek Swartz Creek	● Downtown Gateway Downtown Swartz Creek	▬ Civic Center Primary ID Swartz Creek Civic Center	i Information Kiosk
● Jurisdictional Marker Swartz Creek	▬ Downtown Vehicular Directional Downtown ← Destination Name ← Destination Name Destination → Swartz Creek	▬ Civic Center Secondary ID Civic Center Municipal Building Library/Senior Center Amphitheater Public Safety P Public Parking	+ Trail Directional
▬ Vehicular Directional ← Destination Name ← Destination Name Destination →	P Public Parking ID P Public Lot Name Optional	▬ Civic Center Directional ← Destination Name Destination Name Destination Name → ↑ Destination Name	
▬ Trailblazer ↻ Destination	■ Downtown Park/ Public Space ID Name Name	▬ Civic Center Facility ID (wall-mounted) DONOR RECOGNITION Facility Name	
▬ Park ID Park Name Trail Name Optional	● Downtown Street Sign Add-On Icon/ Badge Name Rd		
			NEIGHBORHOOD ▬ Neighborhood ID Neighborhood Name Name
			Thumbnails are only meant to convey content for each sign type. Final designs may vary greatly from what is shown.

Sign Type Recommendations & Examples

Sign Type	Gateways & Jurisdictional Markers	Vehicular Directionals & Trailblazers
Description & Function	Gateways announce arrival when entering a town. While smaller signs define jurisdictional boundaries, larger gateway elements are often placed at points where one psychologically feels as if they have arrived and at locations that provide the best experiences. Gateways can range from a single sign element to a series of installations, banners, or public art.	Large vehicular signs designed to be easily read by people driving at speeds of 25 mph or more, directing to major destinations or general areas. Messages typically progress from general to specific as a person approaches their destination and can contain multiple or single messages. Typically post-mounted and breakaway, federal and state guidelines dictate design, structure, size and messages.
Examples	   	     

Sign Type Recommendations & Examples

Sign Type	Downtown Gateways	Public Parking Identification & Trailblazers	Facilities & Parks
Description	Usually smaller than City Gateways, these signs signify entry into the Downtown. While designed to be part of the overall sign system, these often have a unique feel specific to represent the character of the area. Like City Gateways, these can range from a single sign to a series of elements.	Parking is a “primary destination” for a driver, therefore, direction to and identification of public lots must be clear to make visitors feel safe, welcomed, and confident that they can leave their car for an extended amount of time.	Signs that identify city facilities and parks not only provide consistent identification, but also inform residents and visitors that the amenities they use are maintained and managed by the town. This helps to foster confidence and pride in their local government. These may include post and panel signs, monuments, glass decals, and dimensional letters/logos.
Examples			

Sign Type Recommendations & Examples

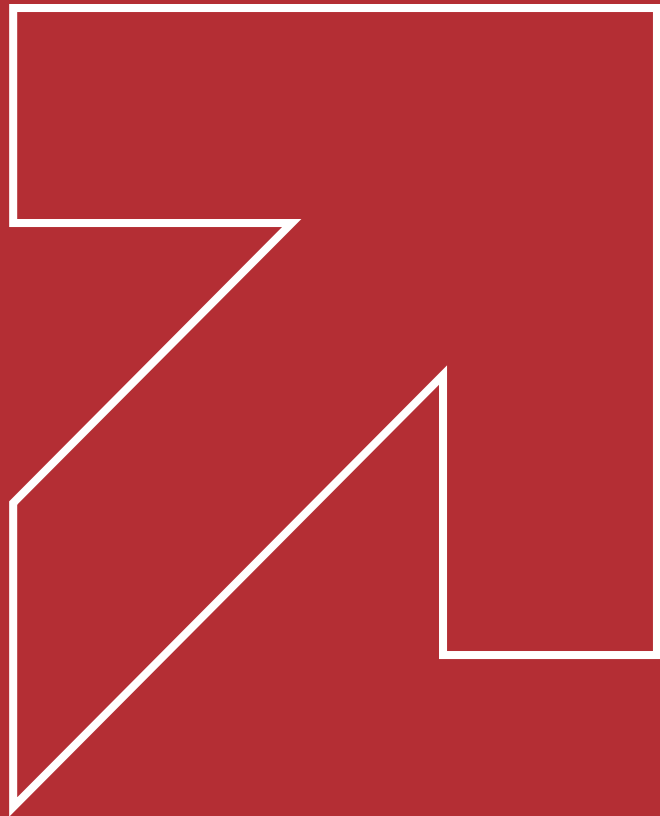
Sign Type	Information Kiosks	Placemaking & Experience	Trail Identification & Directional
Description	A sign that provides orientation and information within a community. This sign could include a changeable map with walking/biking distances, a directory of businesses and services, and areas to promote events.		
Examples	  		

Sign Type Recommendations & Examples

Sign Type	Neighborhood Identification
Description	Signage or placemaking element that identifies a specific neighborhood or district. These items not only help identify entry into specific neighborhoods, but also help foster neighborhood pride.
Examples	A wooden signpost with a colorful graphic of a family walking under a rainbow, with the word "SUNSET" and "NEIGHBORHOOD" below it. A blue and white decorative sign with floral patterns and the text "SLAVIC VILLAGE". A blue street sign for "N Frank Ave" and "W Central Ave" with a circular seal above it. A large wooden sign with a stylized "W" logo and the text "SEVEN WEST AT THE TRAILS" mounted on a stone wall.

Preliminary Budget

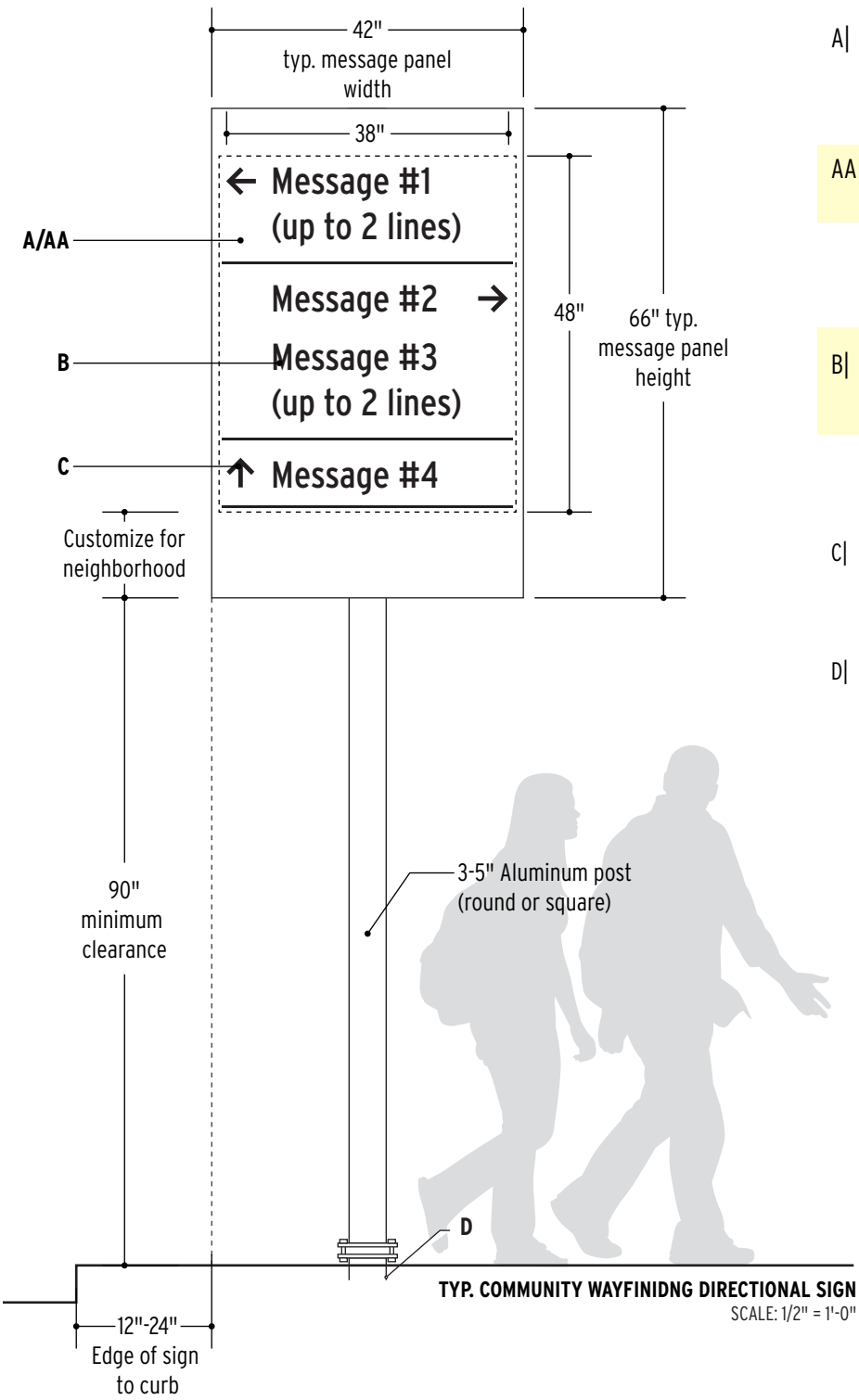
SWC1848 Wayfinding Budget - September 26, 2024								
SIGN TYPE		QTY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	UNIT PRICE	EXTENDED PRICE	EXTENDED PRICE	NOTES
				LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	
City-Wide Program								
	City Gateway - Primary	5	EA	\$13,000.00	\$38,000.00	\$65,000.00	\$190,000.00	
	Jurisdictional Marker	7	EA	\$2,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$17,500.00	\$45,500.00	
	City-wide Vehicular Directionals	5	EA	\$8,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$60,000.00	
	City-wide Vehicular Trailblazers	7	EA	\$5,000.00	\$8,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$56,000.00	
	Park Identification	4	EA	\$5,500.00	\$9,500.00	\$22,000.00	\$38,000.00	can be monument or post and panel, using monument number for now
	Subtotal	28				\$179,500.00	\$389,500.00	
Downtown								
	Downtown Gateway	4	EA	\$6,500.00	\$14,000.00	\$26,000.00	\$56,000.00	
	Downtown Vehicular Directionals	2	EA	\$8,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$16,000.00	\$24,000.00	
	Parking Identification - double sided	4	EA	\$6,000.00	\$9,500.00	\$24,000.00	\$38,000.00	
	Downtown Park/Public Space ID	2	EA	\$5,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$30,000.00	Holland Sq (placemaking) Bicentennial Park (sign)
	Street Sign/Street Sign Topper	13	EA	\$650.00	\$950.00	\$8,450.00	\$12,350.00	
	Subtotal	25				\$84,450.00	\$160,350.00	
Civic Center								
	Civic Center Identification - Primary	2	EA	\$9,500.00	\$15,000.00	\$19,000.00	\$30,000.00	at Paul Fortino Dr.
	Civic Center Identification - Secondary	1	EA	\$5,500.00	\$9,500.00	\$5,500.00	\$9,500.00	at Civic Center Dr. replaces current sign (retrofit or remove)
	Civic Center ID - Dimensional Mounted Letters	7	EA	\$4,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$31,500.00	\$52,500.00	Depends on size, number of letters, & installation conditions
	Civic Center Vehicular Directional	1	EA	\$6,000.00	\$9,500.00	\$6,000.00	\$9,500.00	
	Subtotal	11				\$62,000.00	\$101,500.00	
Other								
	Neighborhood IDs	0	EA	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	TBD
	Information Kiosk	6	EA	\$6,500.00	\$10,500.00	\$39,000.00	\$63,000.00	Non-digital
	Trail Directional	7	EA	\$5,000.00	\$9,500.00	\$35,000.00	\$66,500.00	
	Subtotal	13				\$74,000.00	\$129,500.00	
	Guide Professional Fees					\$25,000.00	\$44,500.00	low end is just Design Development, high-end is through Implementation
	Total based on Preliminary Programming	77				\$399,950.00	\$780,850.00	
	Contingency			15%	20%	\$59,992.50	\$156,170.00	
	GRAND TOTAL					\$484,942.50	\$981,520.00	
	Park Rules & Regulations	4	EA	\$2,000.00	\$5,500.00	\$8,000.00	\$22,000.00	not needed at this time (recently installed new ones)
GENERAL NOTES:								
1. Costs will be affected by final materials, dimensions, quantities, and overall design.								
2. Prices above include installation per sign type. Installation costs are typically affected by the quantity of signs implemented at once. (Greater quantities typically reduce overall installation costs).								
3. Above costs do not include Guide Studio bid & implementation management, permitting, engineering, running of power to illuminated signs, and additional costs/fees by the fabricator.								



Signage Guidelines & Regulations

Signage Guidelines & Regulations

Federal and state guidelines limit the amount of information that is allowed on vehicular wayfinding signs. Studies have shown that humans can only comprehend a particular number of messages traveling at certain speeds.



ANATOMY OF A VEHICULAR COMMUNITY WAYFINDING SIGN

GENERAL GUIDELINES

A| Background and graphics to be retro-reflective using high-intensity prismatic vinyl (graphics may be printed on diamond grade reflective sheeting)

AA| Message Quantity: < 35MPH
Max. four (4) destinations
Typ. of urban conditions

Message Quantity: > 35MPH
Max. three (3) destinations

B| Font size: < 35MPH
4" Copy Height
Typ. of urban conditions

Font size: > 35MPH
5-6" Copy Height

C| Arrow Style:
San Serif
"Placed with directive"

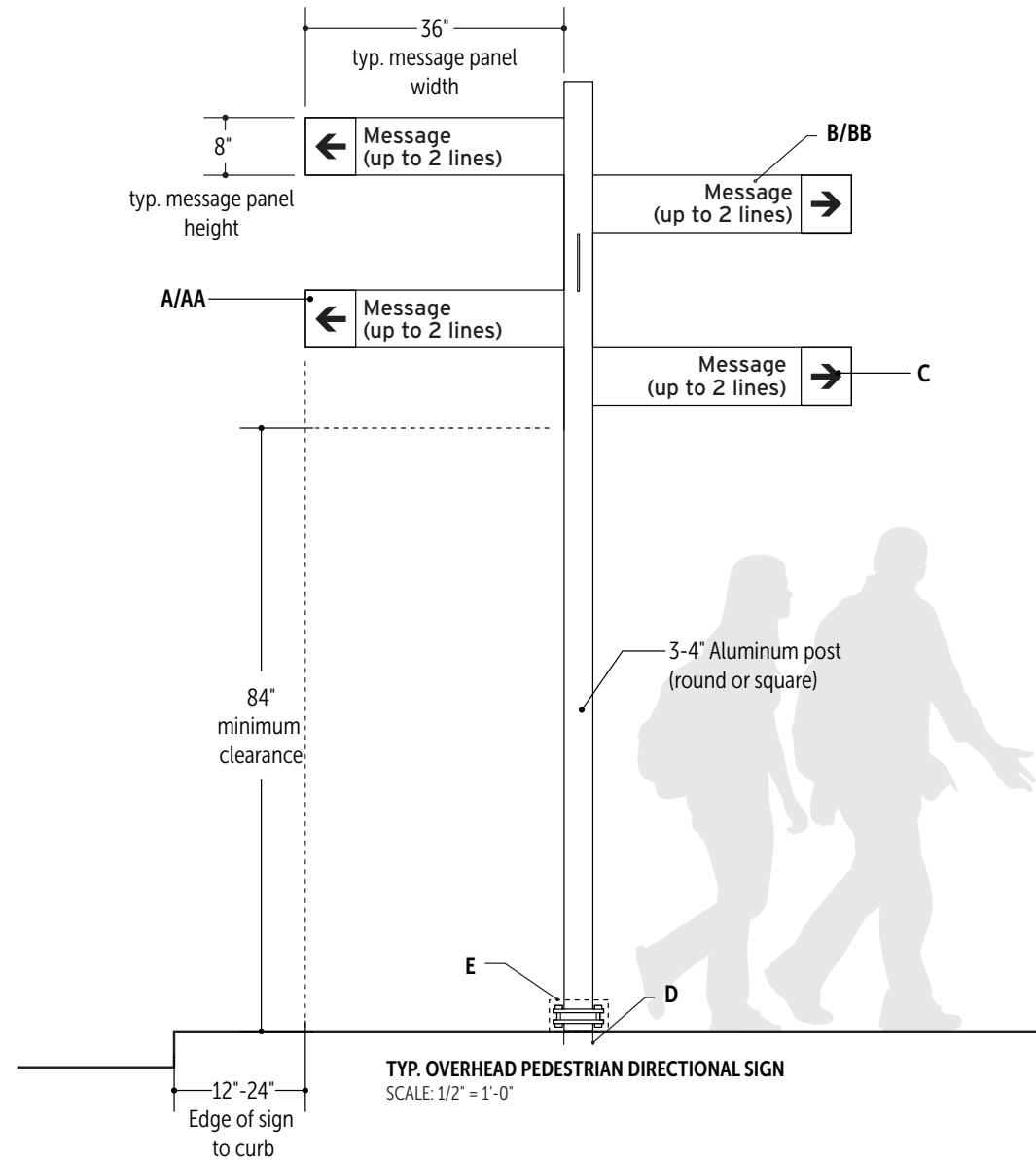
D| Break-away pole connection/foundation as approved by DOT/FHWA

DESIGN CRITERIA & WAYFINDING STRATEGY

- > **USER FRIENDLY | Text, graphics and mapping is legible and uncomplicated.**
 - Directional messages will be limited to no more than 4–5 messages.
 - The users' initial destination for all vehicular wayfinding is Parking (closest to their destination).
- > **AESTHETICS | Harmonious in all respects, enduring design and appropriate scale.**
- > **MAINTAINABLE | Cleanable, repairable surfaces, information easily changed or added, low maintenance and durable. Information hierarchy allows for an organized and manageable wayfinding program.**
- > **VANDAL RESISTANT | No exposed access points, tamper proof screws and bolts, strong structures that are securely installed.**
- > **ORIENTATION | Signs oriented for the greatest visibility for users.**
 - Landscaping and other structures should enhance and not interfere with the visibility of the sign.
 - Directional signs will be implemented at key decision points and announce only major visitor-based destinations. Private businesses (corporate offices, restaurants, hospitality, etc.) are not typically placed on community wayfinding signs.
- > **CONSISTENCY | Sign/element design are consistent throughout the sign system and easily recognized as information hubs throughout the City.**
 - Nomenclature should be consistent from wayfinding signs down to actual identification at the destination arrival point. This consistent language should flow down to pedestrian sign systems as well as destination language used by the places and institutions themselves.
 - Parking lot identification sets up a recognizable system, limits message lengths, and reinforces a unified parking experience.
- > **SYSTEM | This program must consider the use of all wayfinding tools and not simply signage.**
 - Sign messages should be communicated in a hierarchial progression from general to specific as visitors move from the outskirts of the city toward their destination.
 - Effective wayfinding provides the most critical information at the proper and relevant time.

Signage Guidelines & Regulations

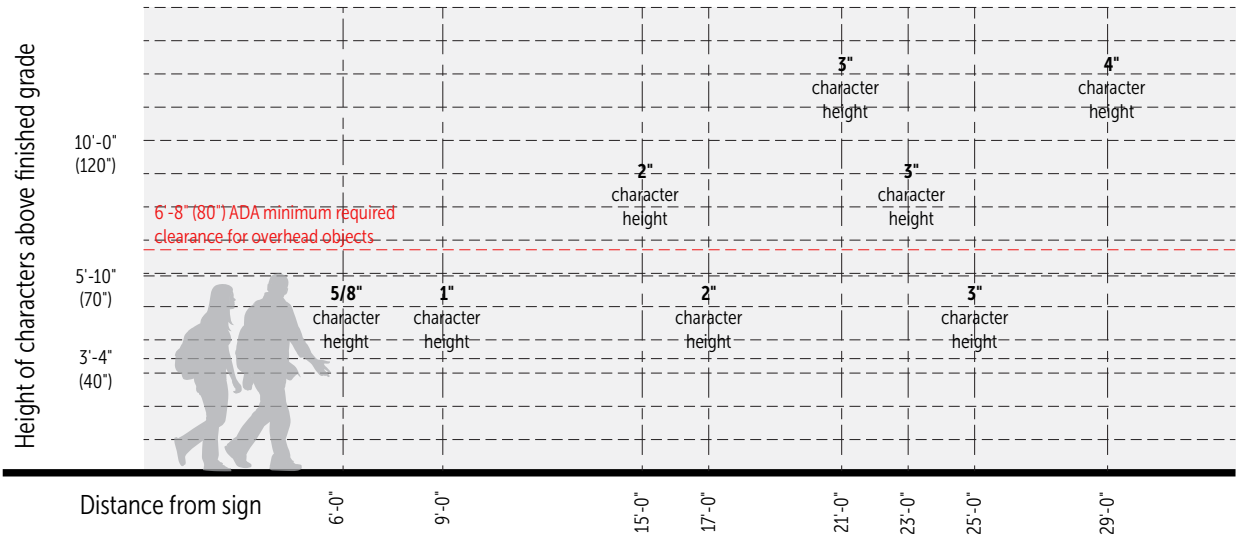
Federal and state regulations do not apply to pedestrian signage, however, guidelines have been established based on accessibility. ADA compliance & other wayfinding principles should be followed.



ANATOMY OF A PEDESTRIAN COMMUNITY WAYFINDING SIGN

VISUAL CHARACTER SIZE

per the SEGDA ADA Update – Signage and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design



*Character heights shown are the minimum recommended cap height of the letters.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- A| **Background and graphics** are typically paint and vinyl (not required to be reflective)
- AA| **Panels** are typically aluminum and attached to be modular for ease of updating
- B| **Font size** is based on a combination of the typical viewing distance and height above grade (Recommend 3" minimum for overhead)
- BB| **Font style** should be sans serif (Headers and decorative elements may be serif)
- C| **Arrow Style** should be San Serif and "placed with directive"
- D| **Break-away pole** connection/ foundation as approved by DOT/FHWA (Required if sign is placed within the public right of way)
- E| **Decorative base** to cover hardware