



Branded Campus Wayfinding Exterior 100% Schematic Design Package

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An aerial photograph of a campus, likely Foothill College, with a semi-transparent red overlay. The image shows various buildings, parking lots, and green spaces. The red overlay is more prominent in the upper left and bottom left corners, fading towards the right.

Introduction

This Branded Campus Wayfinding Exterior Schematic Design Package represents a critical next step in the implementation of Foothill College's exterior sign program, building upon the foundation established in Phase 01. Phase 02 transitions the strategic vision into tangible design concepts—translating planning into practice.

Each element of the proposed system aims to enhance the user experience while reinforcing a unified, on-brand visual language. Together, these designs form a comprehensive wayfinding system that not only improves campus navigation, but also celebrates Foothill's distinctive character, setting, and spirit.

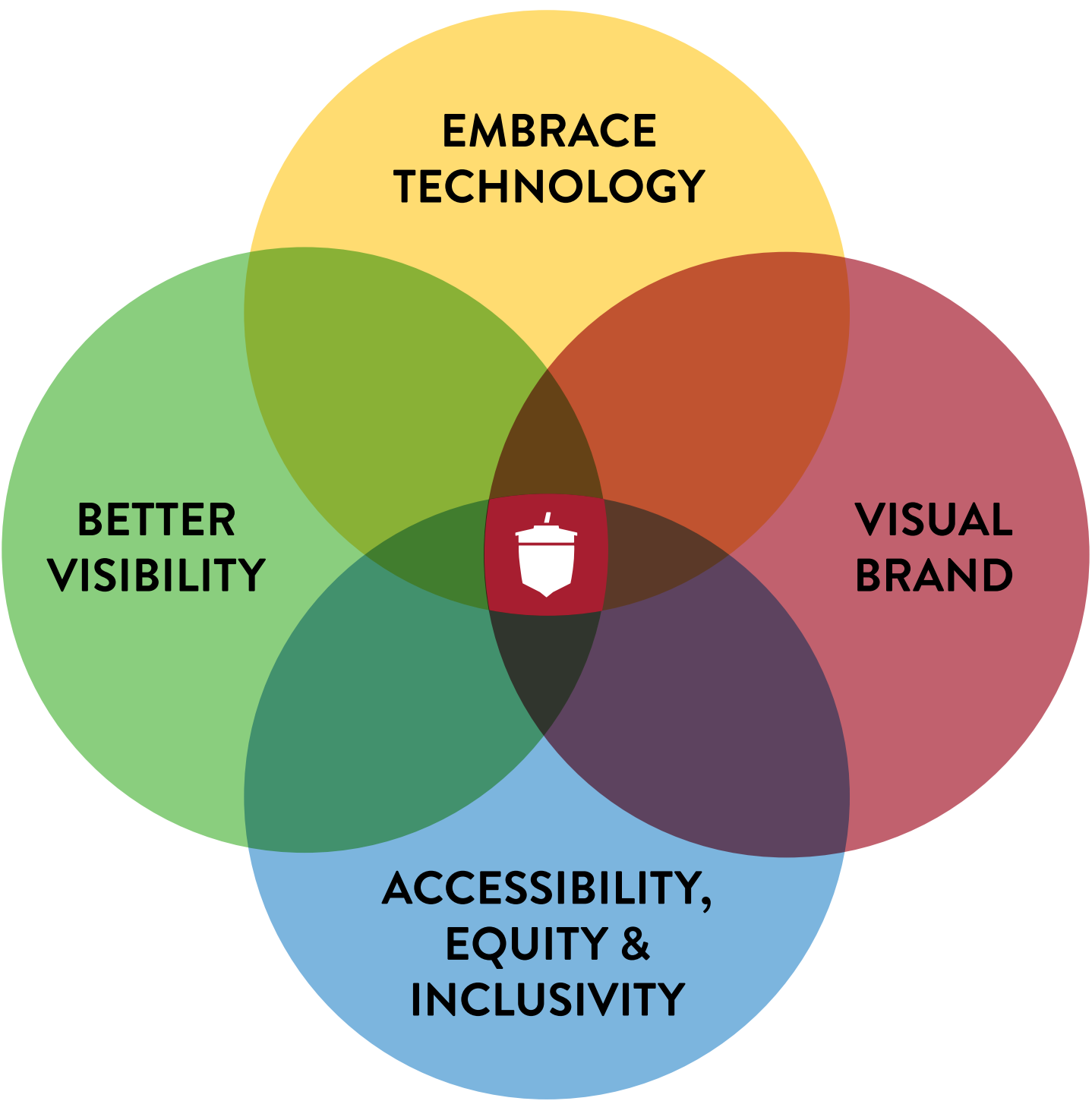
List of Items:

- **Bridging Vision to Design Implementation**
- **GNU Group Design Statement**
- **Visual Language**
- **Technology & the Wayfinding Experience**

BRIDGING VISION TO DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION

Following the successful approval of the Foothill College Branded Campus Wayfinding Masterplan, this Phase 02 Schematic Design Package builds upon the foundational strategies established in that effort – transforming the recommendations into tangible, on-brand design concepts.

Where Phase 01 defined what the campus needs, Phase 02 explores how those needs come to life through scale, materiality, hierarchy, and visual language. Each concept continues to align with Foothill College’s mission of accessibility, inclusion, and innovation while celebrating the College’s distinctive setting and architecture.



DESIGN STATEMENT

Foothill College’s original campus, designed in the early 1960s, stands as an enduring example of mid-century modernism — a composition of clarity, proportion, and restraint that harmonizes with the surrounding landscape. GNU Group’s design approach for the new Branded Campus Sign Program is rooted in honoring that legacy while translating it into a contemporary, on-brand visual language. Every design solution seeks to reinforce the College’s identity with a system that is clear, intuitive, and timeless — one that belongs to the campus grounds and architecture rather than competes with it.

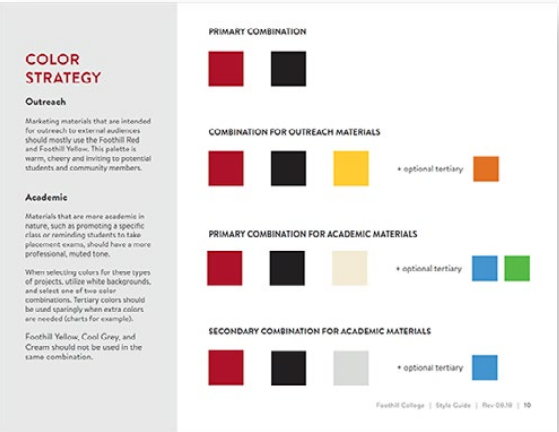
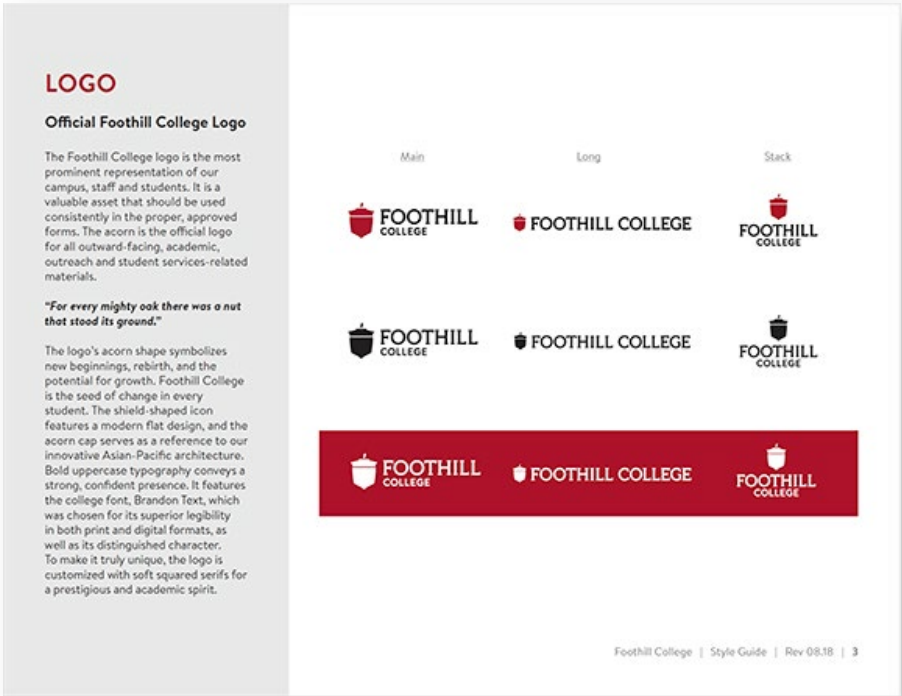
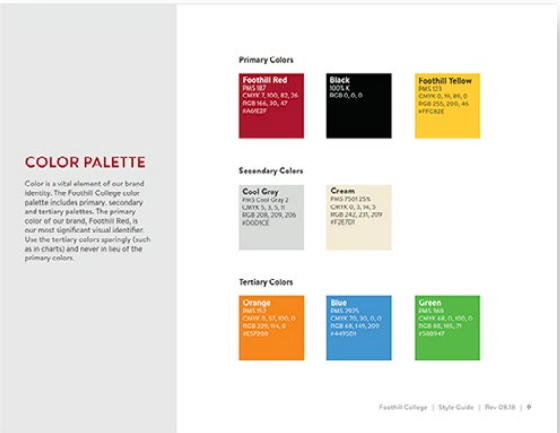
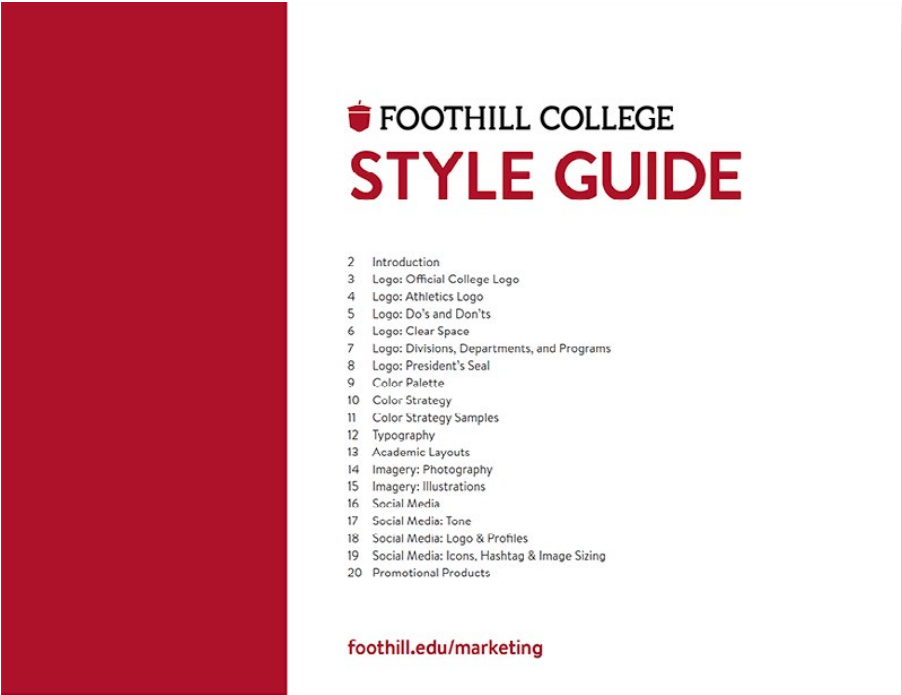
Our focus is to achieve a thoughtful balance between visibility and subtlety, modernity and heritage. The new sign family will integrate Foothill’s visual brand standards with materials, forms, and proportions that echo the campus’s original design principles — simplicity, legibility, and unity of composition. The result will be a coherent and enduring system that not only strengthens campus navigation but also reflects the integrity, innovation, and human-centered spirit that have defined Foothill College for more than six decades.



VISUAL LANGUAGE: THE FOOTHILL VISUAL BRAND

Foothill College’s visual brand is more than a logo or color palette — it’s a language that communicates who the College is and what it stands for. Rooted in clarity, inclusivity, and innovation, this language guides every expression of the campus environment. The new Branded Campus Sign Program extends that voice into the physical realm, ensuring that every sign, graphic, and touchpoint reflects the College’s established tone and visual standards.

Through consistent use of identity, typography, color, and proportion, the wayfinding system will reinforce Foothill’s distinctive brand character. This continuity strengthens recognition, pride, and belonging, creating a campus environment that both speaks and feels like Foothill College.



VISUAL LANGUAGE: INFORMATION HIERARCHY

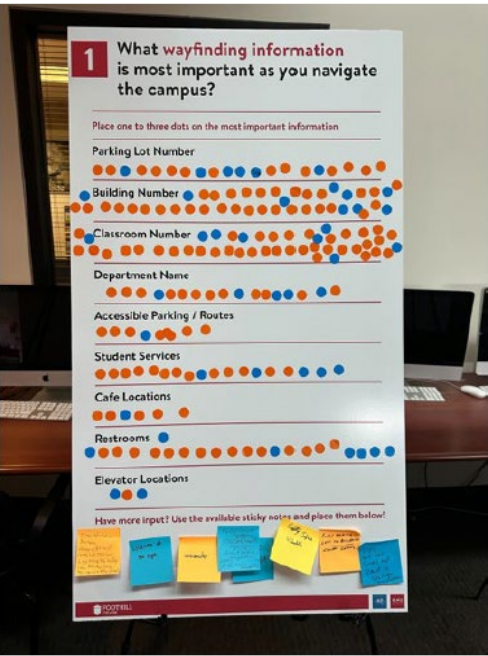
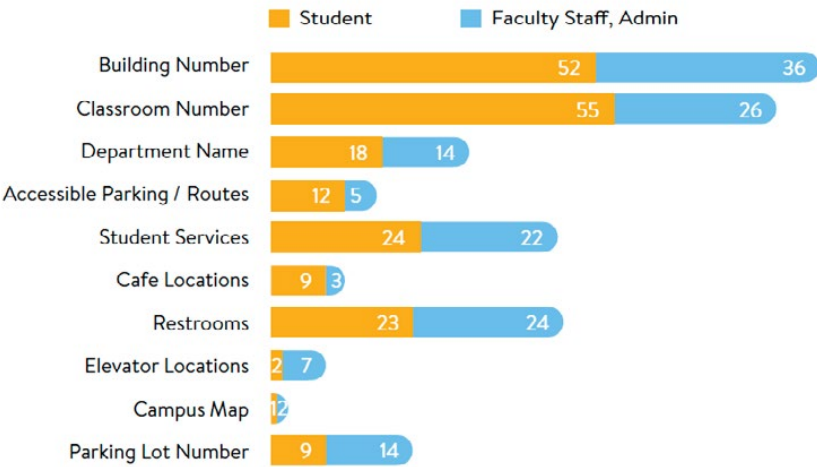
An effective wayfinding system relies on a clear and consistent hierarchy of information. At Foothill College, this principle ensures that every sign—whether at campus arrival, along the ring road, or within the campus core—communicates just the right amount of information for the moment of need. The new branded sign program organizes content by scale, context, and user type, guiding visitors from general orientation to specific destination with intuitive clarity. By prioritizing readability, sequencing, and visual consistency, the system reduces cognitive load, minimizes sign clutter, and enhances overall navigation efficiency, allowing users to focus on where they’re going, not how to get there.

- Parking Lots / Drop-off
- Zones (ie: 2000s)
- Buildings (ie: 2200)
- Classrooms (ie: 2243)
- Departments & Destinations
- Student Organizations
- Campus Programs
- Campus Amenities



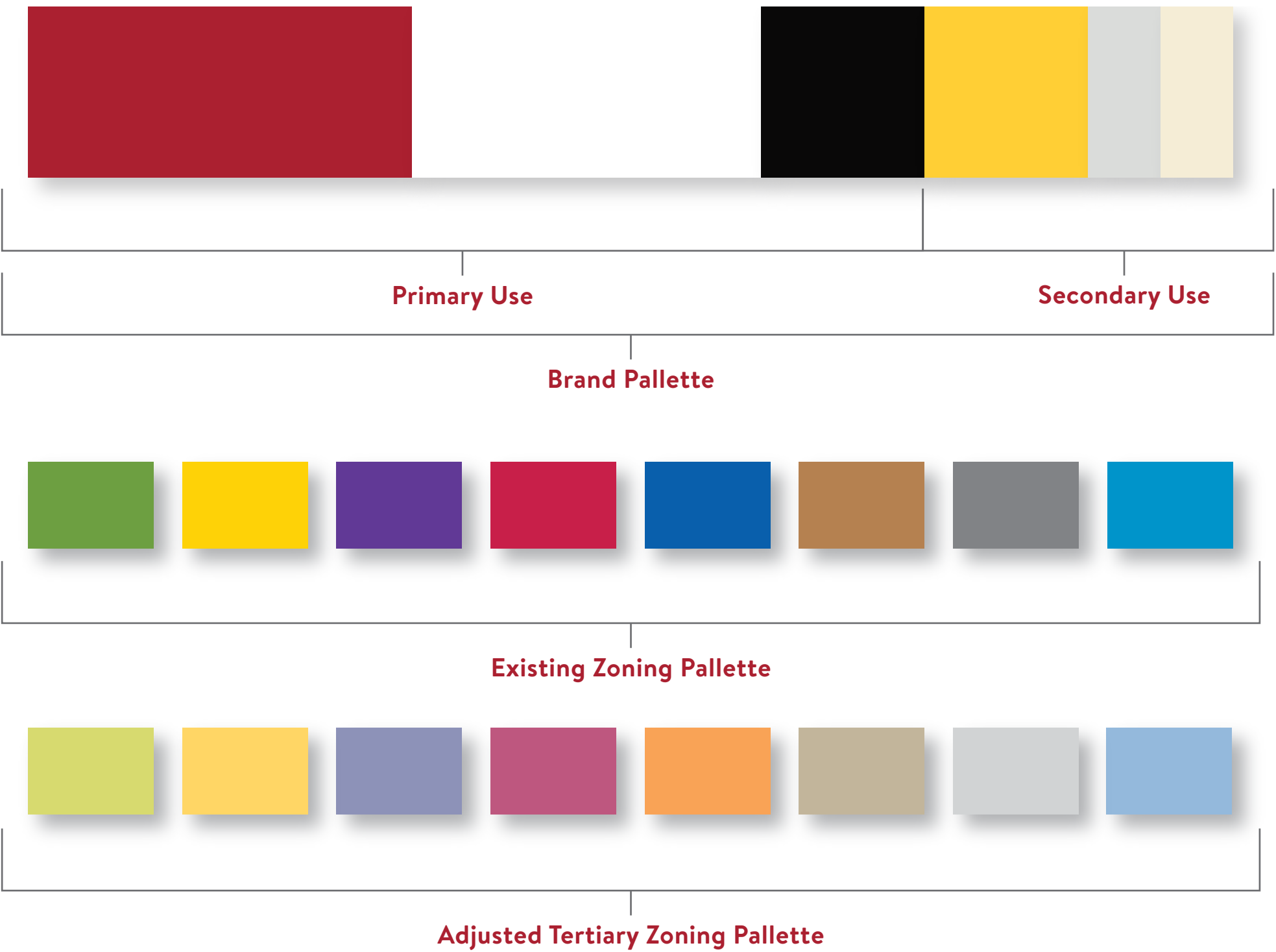
1

What wayfinding information is most important as you navigate the campus?



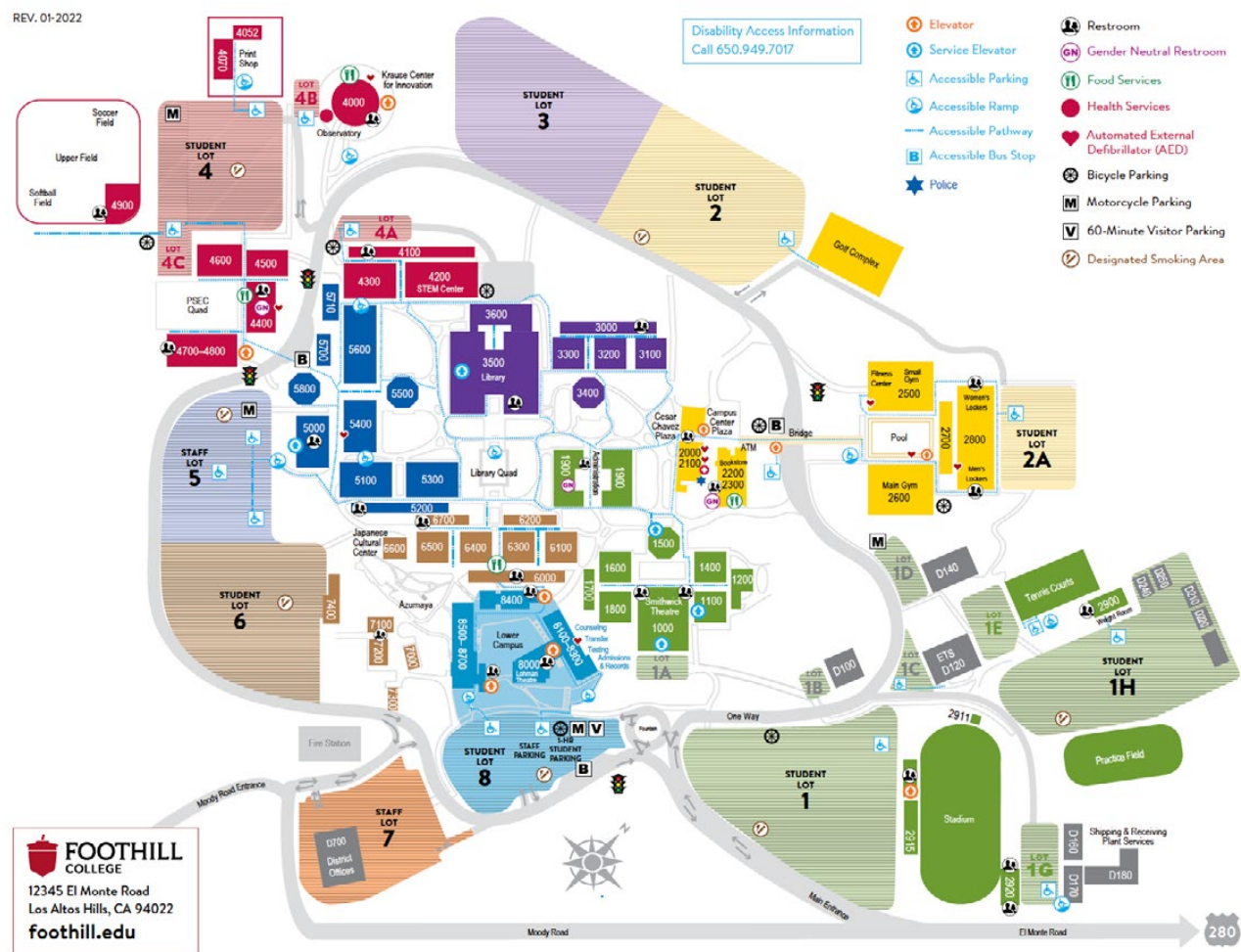
VISUAL LANGUAGE: THE ROLE OF COLOR

Color is one of the most powerful tools in shaping both brand recognition and navigational clarity. At Foothill College, the use of color extends beyond aesthetics—it reinforces the College’s visual brand while supporting intuitive wayfinding across campus. The established zone color system serves as a unifying framework, linking maps, signage, and digital tools through consistent cues that help users orient themselves at a glance. By aligning brand colors with environmental application, the sign program strengthens Foothill’s identity, enhances legibility, and creates a more connected and memorable campus experience.



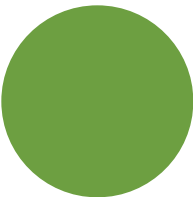
VISUAL LANGUAGE: ZONING & THEMING

Foothill College’s existing campus zones provide a strong foundation for orientation and identity. The new Branded Campus Sign Program embraces these zones as an organizing framework—clarifying building clusters, simplifying navigation, and enhancing campus legibility. As part of this evolution, existing color palettes may be refined to better integrate with the natural and built environment while maintaining brand alignment. Beyond color, the opportunity exists to introduce subtle thematic or educational references unique to each zone—drawing inspiration from Foothill’s academic disciplines, landscape, or cultural values. Together, these strategies create a system that is both functional and expressive, transforming wayfinding into a layered experience of discovery and connection.

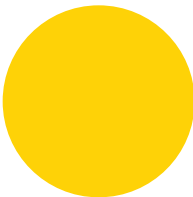


Create a graphic vocabulary to accent each of the campus ZONE colors based on important plants and herbs used by local native americans tribes

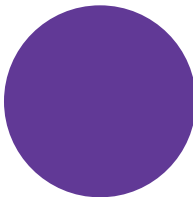
Mugwort
wíwīš
(Ohlone)



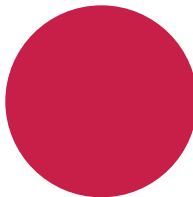
Mugwort
wíwīš
(Ohlone)



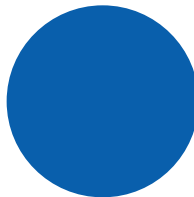
Yerba Santa
pukute
(Mutsun/Ohlone)



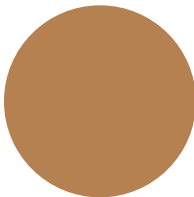
Yarrow
pale
(Miwok)



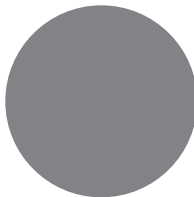
Sage Seeds
kuhmin
(Maidu)



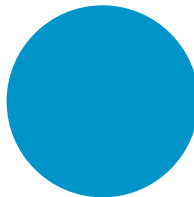
Acorn
téxse
(Rumsen/Ohlone)



Tule
t’óli
(Patwin)



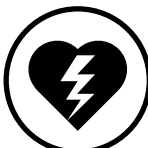
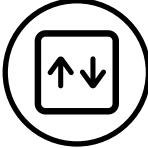
Manzanita
čákela
(Ohlone)



Bay Laurel
sákil
(Miwok)

VISUAL LANGUAGE: PROGRAM ICONOGRAPHY

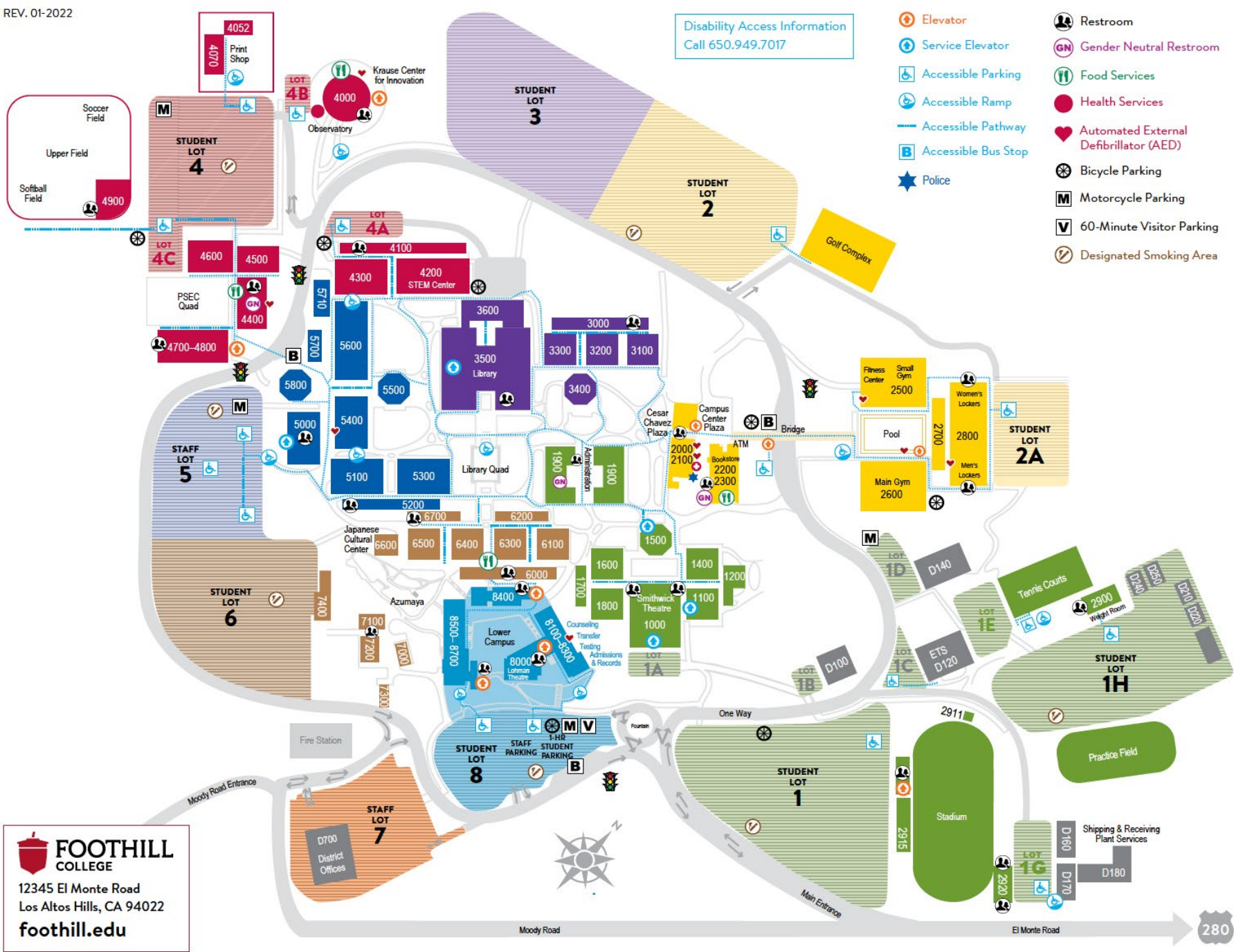
Iconography plays a critical role in creating clear, equitable, and universally understood communication across campus. The Foothill College Branded Campus Sign Program will utilize a well-defined, tested set of icons that align with established accessibility standards and global best practices. These symbols, when applied consistently, transcend language barriers, improve legibility at a distance, and reinforce the College’s visual brand through thoughtful proportion and detailing. By pairing recognizable icons with concise messaging, the sign program ensures that information is delivered quickly, intuitively, and inclusively—supporting a seamless navigation experience for all campus users.

	ISA Symbol		Drop Off		Health Services
	Restrooms		Deliveries		Food Services
	ADA Accessible Restrooms		60 Minute Visitor Parking		AED Automated External Defibrillator
	Bike Parking		No Smoking		Police
	Bike Path		Designated Smoking Zone		Bus Stop
	Ride Share Drop Off		Elevator		Motorcycle Parking

VISUAL LANGUAGE: THE CAMPUS MAP

A clear, accurate, and consistently presented campus map is essential to the success of the Foothill College Branded Campus Sign Program. Beyond its role on physical directories, the map serves as the visual backbone for all navigation tools—anchoring printed signage, the college website, and mobile access points through QR code integration.

Proper orientation, legible hierarchy, and alignment with the College’s campus zoning and brand standards ensure that users experience the same clarity and confidence whether planning their visit online or finding their way on campus. This unified approach strengthens accessibility, promotes efficiency, and reinforces Foothill’s commitment to an inclusive, connected campus experience.



TECHNOLOGY & THE WAYFINDING EXPERIENCE

Technology plays an increasingly important role in creating an informed and connected campus experience.

At Foothill College, the integration of strategically placed QR codes extends wayfinding beyond the physical environment. These discreet yet powerful touchpoints, located on key orientation and directory signs, allow users to instantly access campus maps, building directories, event information, and accessible pathways directly from their mobile devices. This seamless connection between static and digital information supports real-time navigation, promotes inclusivity, and reflects Foothill College’s commitment to innovation and user-centered design.



An aerial photograph of the Foothill College campus, showing various buildings, parking lots, and green spaces. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The campus layout includes several large rectangular buildings, some with flat roofs, and others with more complex shapes. There are numerous trees scattered throughout the campus, particularly in the foreground and along the edges. A road or path runs through the middle of the campus, and several parking areas are visible. The overall scene is a detailed view of the college's exterior environment.

Design Concepts

In the initial presentation, three refined approaches were developed for Foothill College's exterior wayfinding and identification system. Following review and discussion, a decision was made to move forward with the selected direction outlined in this section. This chosen concept continues to align with the Branded Campus Wayfinding Exterior Signage Masterplan, emphasizing clarity, consistency, and a cohesive visual identity.

The design includes a prominent entry monument sign at the main campus entrance, vehicular directional signage for campus circulation, campus map kiosks for pedestrian orientation, and building and department identification signage for clear recognition. Together, these elements establish a unified and functional system that enhances navigation and strengthens the Foothill College identity.

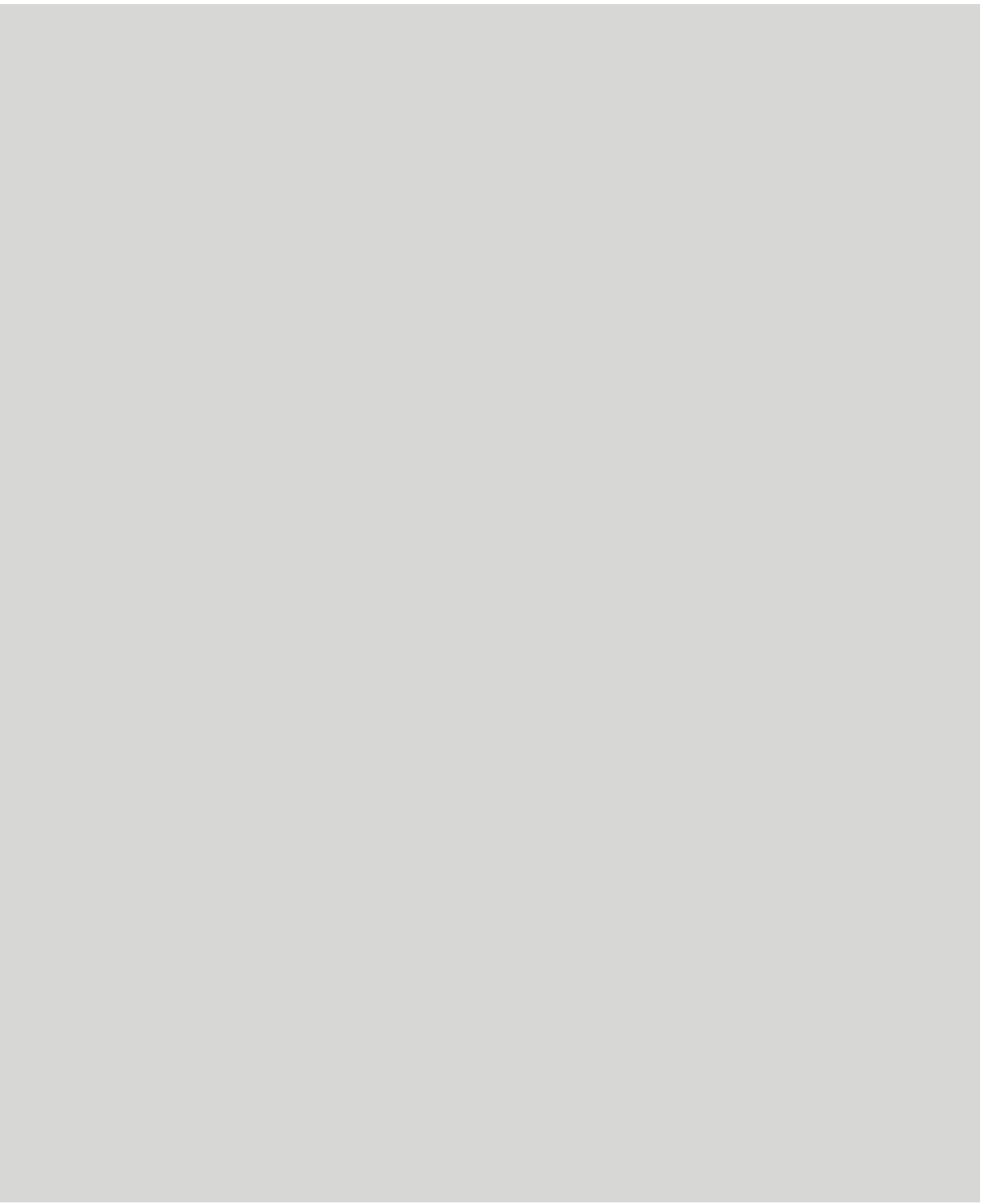
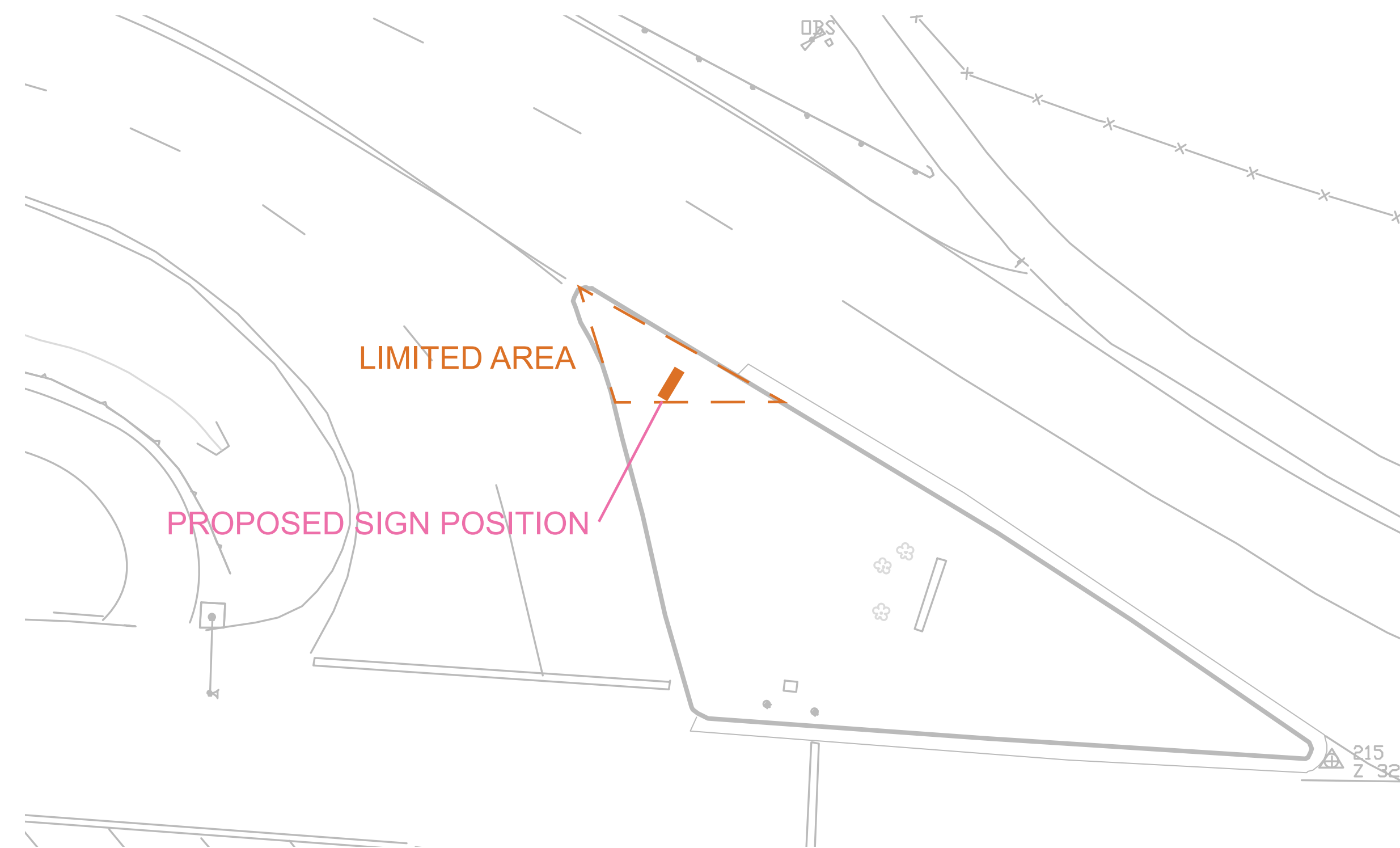
List of Items:

- **Entry Monument on El Monte Rd.**
- **Comprehensive Sign Family**

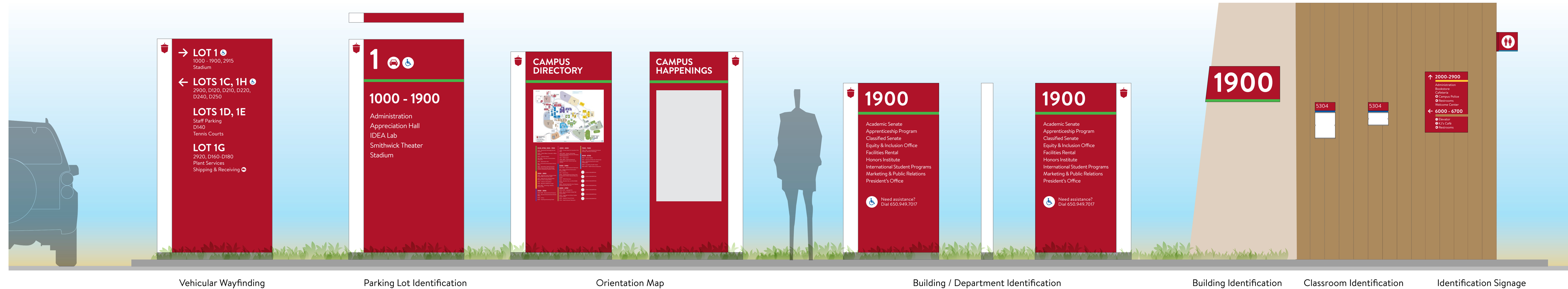
CONCEPT 1 ENTRY FEATURE



CONCEPT 1 ENTRY FEATURE



SIGN FAMILY



SIGN FAMILY

