



# Campus Wayfinding

December 2005



# University of Connecticut

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# Campus Wayfinding

**Introduction** The University of Connecticut Storrs Campus has seen a significant transformation over the past ten years resulting from the UConn 2000 initiative. Along with this growth, the resultant increase in population, traffic congestion, pedestrian safety, and accessibility have become primary concerns.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century UConn initiative, scheduled to begin in 2005, will continue this growth trend well into the next decade. In order to keep pace with the projected campus transformation, a well organized signage and wayfinding program is needed to safely and efficiently guide campus users.

**Purpose** The following priorities were identified for campus wayfinding:

- Efficiently and safely direct visitors to public parking facilities from which they can utilize the university's bus system or move about the campus as pedestrians.
- Reduce the amount of university-related vehicular traffic on Connecticut Highway 195 (CT-195), especially during peak hours and significant events.
- Minimize unnecessary on-campus vehicular traffic while reinforcing a strong pedestrian focus.
- Consider the role of future roadway additions in managing traffic flow.
- Establish standards for a unified sign system including a new system for announcing temporary events.

**Campus Assessment** The following key observations were noted in the inventory of wayfinding signs:

## *Off-Campus Vehicular*

- Signs guiding access to campus are not adequate (quantity, size, location, message).

## *On-Campus Vehicular*

- Signs and text are often too small and are therefore not readable from a moving vehicle.
- Signs are inconsistent in style, color, and size.
- Some signs convey too many messages.
- Directional arrows are confusing in numerous instances.
- Signs containing both directional and identification language are confusing.
- Parking lot identification and regulatory signs are difficult to read and often positioned awkwardly.
- There are numerous occurrences of unnecessary and obsolete signs.



### *On-Campus Pedestrian*

- Some of the permanent campus maps are located where pedestrian traffic no longer occurs, or where it is minimal.
- There are numerous unnecessary, obsolete, and blank signs.
- The location and character of some signs degrade the campus image.
- Temporary event signs present a poor image.

### *Building Identification*

- Identification signs are often positioned parallel to the building and are therefore not easily readable when walking past the building.

## **Guiding Principles**

Working sessions with the Wayfinding Committee identified the following overarching principles to guide recommendation development:

- Focus recommendations on the visitor.
- Minimize the number of signs utilized.
- Use consistent design standards.
- Minimize message complexity.

## **Wayfinding Recommendations**

Detailed recommendations were developed for the following wayfinding elements:

- Off-Campus Vehicular Directional Signs
- Campus Gateways
- On-Campus Vehicular Directional Signs
- On-Campus Pedestrian Directional Signs
- Temporary Event Signs

### *Off-Campus Vehicular Directional Signs*

The primary objective off campus is to provide direction and distance information to the campus at major community and regional roadway/highway intersections.

The primary visitor access routes to campus include: Interstate 84 (I-84), US Highways 6 and 44 (US-6 and US-44), and CT-195. A majority of visitors are directed to campus from I-84 along CT-195. Repetition of directional information along this route is a priority. Fewer directional signs are proposed along US-44 and US-6 due to the lower visitor volumes from these routes, and those utilizing these routes are more familiar with the region.

The Campus Master Plan Update contains two significant roadway additions. The Hillside Road extension to US-44 and the proposed Bolton Road connector to South Eagleville Road will help reduce university-related vehicular traffic on CT-195 within the campus' vicinity.

Recommendations:

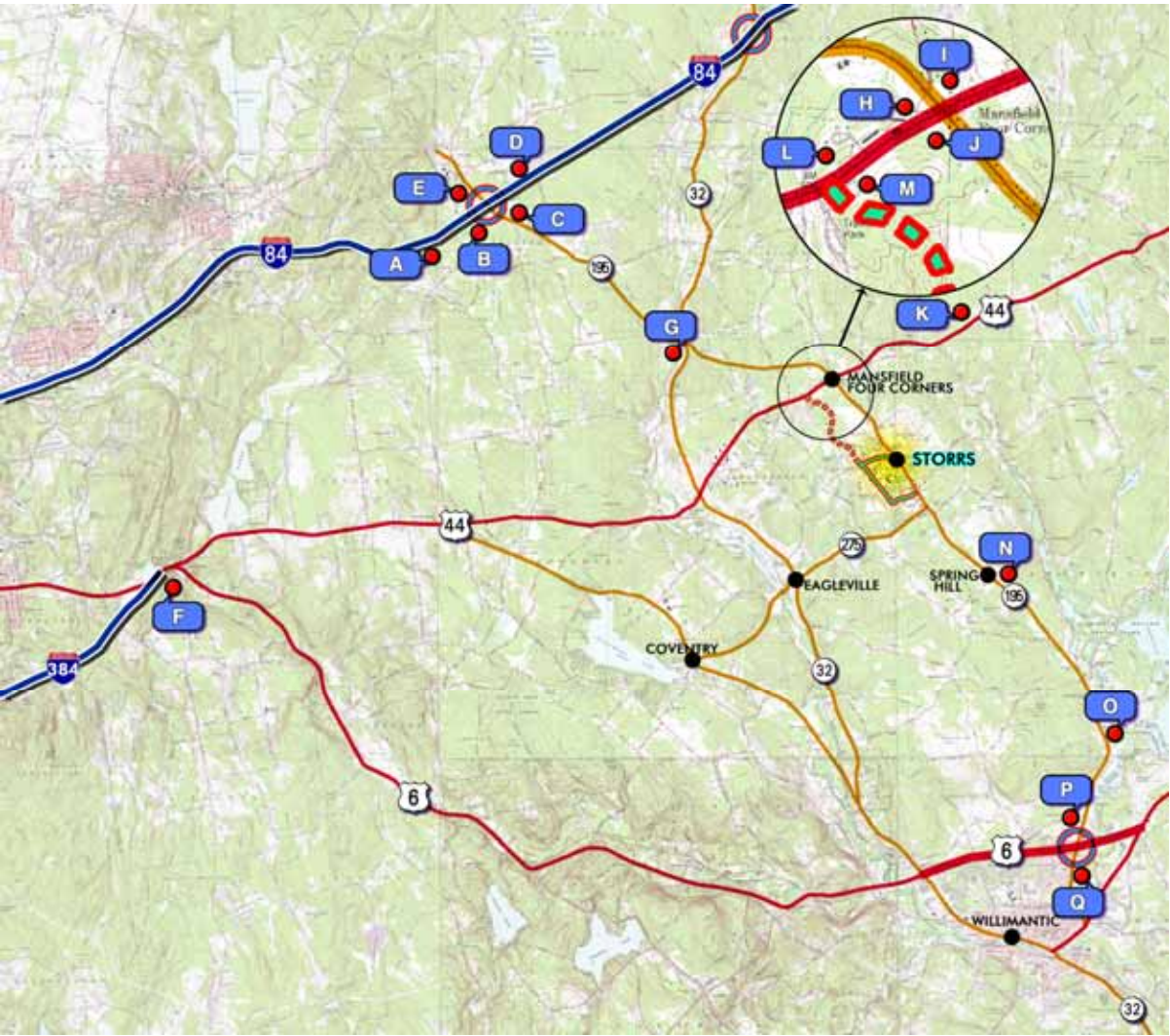
- Incorporate the university signature (oak leaf with UCONN text) on interstate directional signs so that visitors will recall and recognize its use along CT-195.
- Use the university signature on all off-campus directional signs.

- Include the university signature, directional arrow, and distance to campus periodically along approach routes, especially at roadway intersections per Connecticut Department of Transportation standards. Provide adequate distance between directional signs and an upcoming intersection. This distance will depend on existing conditions such as land ownership, existing signs, visual clutter, etc.
- Direct southbound CT-195 visitor traffic west on US-44 to the Hillside Road extension.
- Direct visitors leaving campus from the Hillside and Stadium Road Garages to the Hillside Road extension and out to US-44.

The following table and map provide detailed recommendations on sign locations and message content.

**Table: Off-Campus Vehicular Directional Signs**  
**KEY**

Sign	Facing Direction	Location	Message
<b>At I-84 and CT-195</b>			
A	West	I-84 eastbound (1/2 mile before exit)	UConn EXIT 1/2 Mile
B	West	I-84 eastbound before off ramp	UConn EXIT 68
C	West	after off ramp (eastbound)	UConn ____ Miles →
D	East	I-84 westbound (before off ramp)	UConn EXIT 68
E	East	after off ramp (westbound)	← UConn ____ Miles
<b>At I-384 and US-44</b>			
F	West	I-384 eastbound (1/2 mile before junction)	UConn Keep Left
<b>At CT-32 and CT-195</b>			
G	North	CT-195 southbound	UConn ____ Miles ↑
<b>At US-44 and CT-195</b>			
H	North	CT-195 southbound (to Hillside Road Extn.)	UConn → Lodewick Visitors Center →
I	East	US-44 westbound	UConn ____ Miles ↑
J	West	US-44 eastbound	← Interstate 84
<b>On US-44</b>			
K	East	US-44 eastbound	UConn ____ Miles ↑
<b>At US-44 and Hillside Rd. Extension (Future)</b>			
L	East	US-44 westbound	← UConn
M	South	on Hillside Road Extension	Interstate 84 →
<b>On CT-195</b>			
N	South	CT-195 northbound	UConn ____ Miles ↑
O	North	CT-195 northbound	UConn ____ Miles ↑
<b>At US-6 and CT-195</b>			
P	East	US-6 westbound (after off ramp)	UConn →
Q	West	US-6 eastbound (after off ramp)	← UConn



Off-Campus Directional Signs Location Map



### *Campus Gateways*

Campus gateways announce arrival to the campus at all major vehicular entrances. Their design expression should include a common vocabulary of materials, colors, and plantings, as well as a common message.

Recommendations:

- Develop campus gateways at the following locations:
  - US-44 and Hillside Road (after extension)
  - North Eagleville Road and Hillside Road (existing)
  - CT-195 and North Eagleville Road
  - CT-195 and Bolton Road
  - South Eagleville Road and Bolton Road connector
- Incorporate New England style stone walls (e.g., existing North Eagleville Road and Hillside Road gateway).
- Incorporate both the university name and signature.
- Provide night lighting both to highlight the gateway elements and provide adequate safety and visibility for the surrounding area. Ensure preservation of the night sky in developing the lighting design.
- Encourage design variety by considering site context (e.g., topography, setting, vegetation, etc.).



*Mansfield Road Entry*



*North Eagleville Road Entry (proposed)*

### *On-Campus Vehicular Directional Signs*

The primary objective on campus is to provide direction to public parking facilities. These include the two parking garages and limited parking lots associated with major public destinations.

#### Recommendations:

- Direct traffic away from pedestrian circulation areas to minimize vehicular/pedestrian conflicts.
- Limit the number of visitor destinations that are identified through vehicular signs to the parking garages: Nathan Hale Inn, Lodewick Visitors Center and Fine Arts Center. The trend of using websites to obtain maps and directions electronically prior to arrival greatly reduces the requirement for signs.
- Name the garages after the roadway from which they are accessed. The existing North Garage will be called the Hillside Road Garage, and the South Garage will be called the Stadium Road Garage.
- Use the international symbol for public parking (white P on a blue square).
- Use the university signature on all signs.
- Provide distinctive signs for popular visitor destinations such as the Dairy Bar.
- Ensure that all campus roads have prominent street signs that are easily recognized and legible at a distance from a passing vehicle.
- Include consistent directions and parking information for visitors and events on the Internet, event programs, brochures, invitations, etc.
- Provide adequate information to ensure ease of egress from campus to I-84.

The table and map on the following pages provide detailed recommendations on sign locations and message content.

### *Information on the Internet*

The Internet has become a primary source of information for visitors to obtain directions and campus information in advance of visiting. To this end:

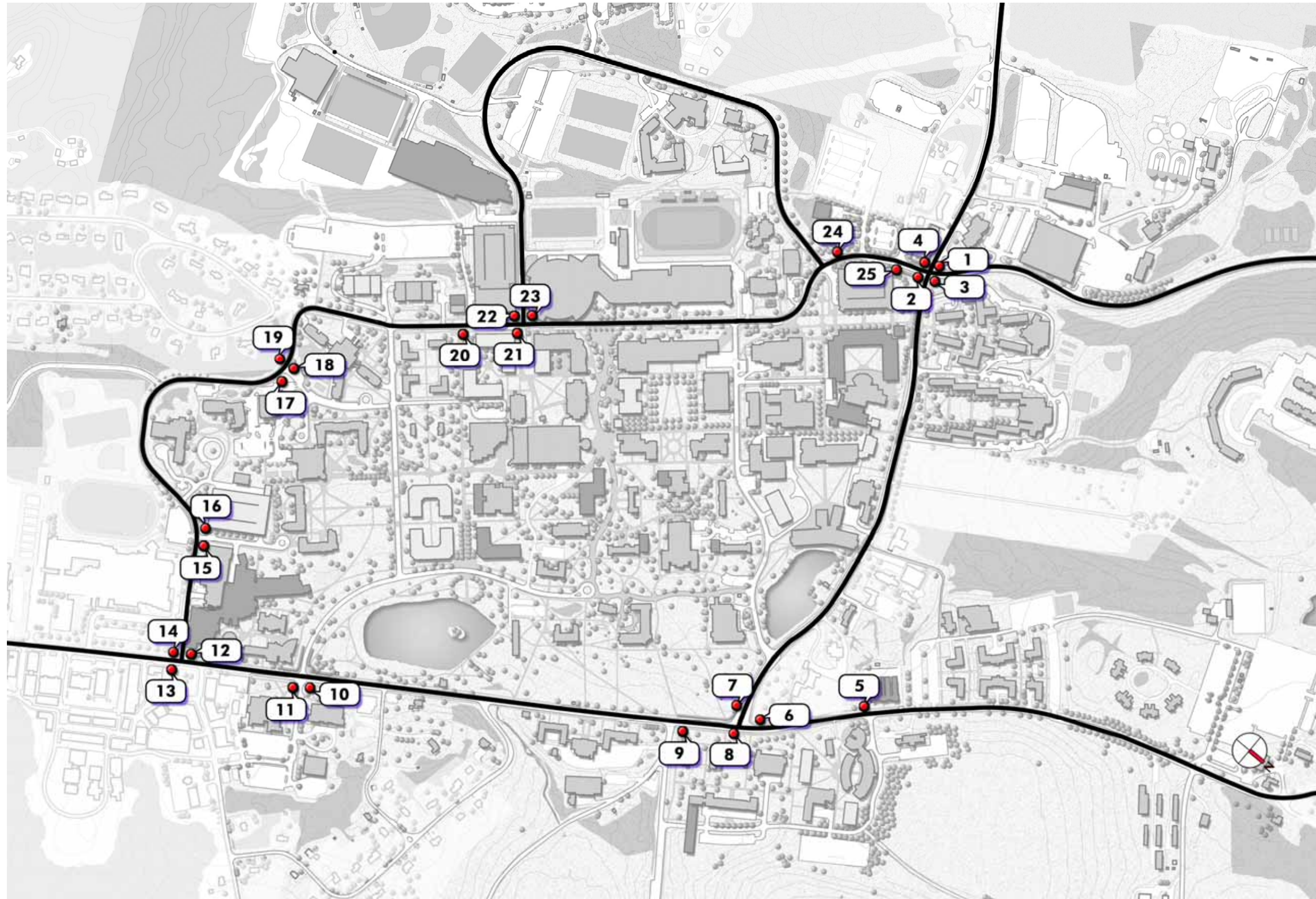
- Focus information specific to visitors in the "Visitors" section of the UConn website.
- Organize information on the website so that it is easy to find.
- Provide up-to-date information specific to on-campus events.
- Update the contents of the website on a constant basis.
- Review the hierarchy and organization of information provided for visitors with each update.



**Table: On-Campus Vehicular Directional Signs**

**KEY**

Number	Facing Direction	Message
<b>At N. Eagleville Road and Hillside Road</b>		
1	North	Hillside Road Garage <b>P</b> , Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> , Lodewick Visitors Center, Co-op <b>↑</b> ← Fine Arts Center, Nathan Hale Inn
2	South	Interstate 84 <b>↑</b>
3	East	Interstate 84 <b>→</b> ← Hillside Road Garage <b>P</b> , Visitors Center
4	West	Hillside Road Garage <b>P</b> , Visitors Center, Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> , Co-op <b>→</b> Fine Arts Center, Nathan Hale Inn <b>↑</b> ← Interstate 84
<b>At CT-195 and N. Eagleville Road</b>		
5	North	Nathan Hale Inn, Fine Arts Center, Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> , Co-op <b>↑</b>
6	North	Hillside Road Garage <b>P</b> , Lodewick Visitors Center <b>→</b>
7	West	← Interstate 84 Fine Arts Center, Nathan Hale Inn <b>→</b>
8	South	← Hillside Road Garage <b>P</b> , Lodewick Visitors Center Interstate 84 <b>↑</b>
<b>At CT-195 and Horse Barn Hill Road</b>		
9	East	Interstate 84 <b>→</b> ← US-6
<b>At CT-195 and Mansfield Road</b>		
10	East	← Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> , Co-op, Nathan Hale Inn, Fine Arts Center, US-6 Interstate 84 <b>→</b>
11	South	Interstate 84 <b>↑</b>
<b>At Bolton Road and CT-195</b>		
12	North	Fine Arts Center, Nathan Hale Inn, Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> , Co-op <b>→</b> US-6 <b>↑</b>
13	South	← Fine Arts Center, Nathan Hale Inn, Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> , Co-op Lodewick Visitors Center <b>↑</b>
14	West	← Interstate 84, Hillside Road Garage <b>P</b> , Lodewick Visitors Center US-6 <b>→</b>
<b>At Fine Arts Center (On Bolton Road)</b>		
15	East	Fine Arts Center <b>→</b> Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> , Co-op, Nathan Hale Inn <b>↑</b>
16	North	← Interstate 84, US-6
<b>At Nathan Hale Inn (On Bolton Road)</b>		
17	South	Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> , Co-op <b>↑</b> Nathan Hale Inn <b>→</b>
18	East	Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> , Co-op <b>→</b> ← Interstate 84, US-6, Fine Arts Center
19	West	← Nathan Hale Inn Interstate 84, US-6, Fine Arts Center <b>↑</b>
<b>On Hillside Road (south side of Stadium Road Garage)</b>		
20	South	← Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b>
<b>At Hillside Road and Stadium Road</b>		
21	South	← Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> Interstate 84, Lodewick Visitors Center, Hillside Road Garage <b>P</b> <b>↑</b>
22	West	← Interstate 84 US-6 <b>→</b>
23	North	Stadium Road Garage <b>P</b> <b>→</b>
<b>At Hillside Road and Alumni Drive</b>		
24	North	← Hillside Road Garage <b>P</b>
<b>At Hillside Road and drive to Student Health (2-sided sign)</b>		
25	North	Student Health <b>→</b>
	South	← Student Health



*On-Campus Vehicular Directional Signs Location Map*

### *On-Campus Pedestrian Directional Signs*

Given the wide range of potential destinations, numerous elements are required to successfully guide pedestrians from the parking garages to campus locations. These elements include wayfinding stations, informational kiosks, campus maps, and building identification signs. Each of these elements has a distinct function.

Recommendations:

- Provide adequate orientation and directions (at parking garages and other locations providing visitor parking) to facilitate the transition from the vehicular to the pedestrian realm.
- Encourage visitors to use campus transit by providing adequate information at key locations and signs at bus stops. Inform visitors that campus transit is free.
- Eliminate existing directional signs for buildings. These add additional complexity to the wayfinding system and may prove to be expensive and difficult to keep up to date.
- Standardize building identification signs.
- Coordinate sign placement to minimize visual clutter.

### Wayfinding Stations

These stations will conveniently provide visitors with an array of campus information that will assist in guiding them around campus as a pedestrian or via the university bus system. The stations should include a legible campus map (enclosed and posted on the wall), paper campus maps, transit maps, and other pertinent information that a visitor may take (e.g., walking tours). The stations need to be highly visible, brightly lit, and constantly stocked. As an option, the stations could include an electronic display announcing campus events and advertising other university functions.

It is recommended that a limited number of stations be placed at the following strategic locations:

- Elevator lobby of each parking garage
- Nathan Hale Inn lobby
- Wilbur Cross Building
- Homer Babbidge Library lobby

Additionally, consider providing copies of the current campus map in acrylic map boxes at the ticket pickup location of garage entrances.

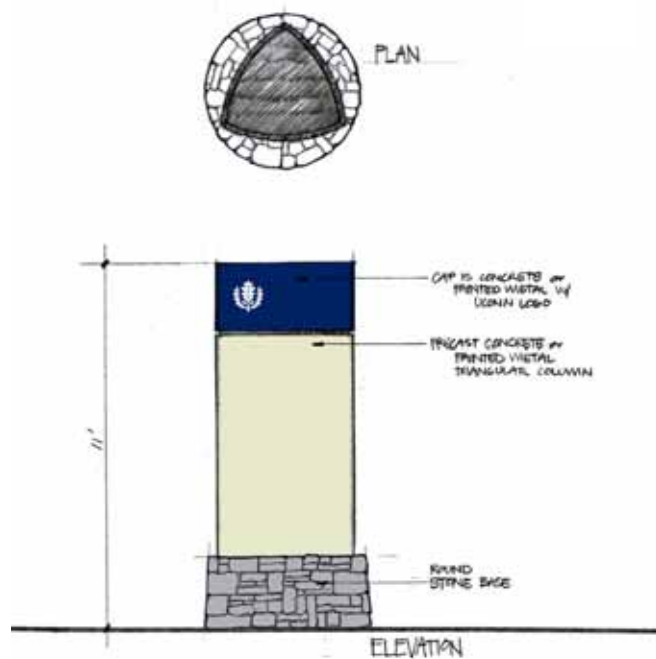
The potential for using interactive electronic wayfinding stations was evaluated during this study. Electronic stations are typically computer operated with a simple user interface that allows a person to obtain information about the campus and daily events. Some models allow the printing of campus maps or walking directions to a specified destination. However, given the advent of the internet and the fact that visitors are, more often than not, obtaining directions in advance of arriving, it was determined that these electronic stations were not justifiable when compared to their high cost and continual maintenance requirements.



### Informational Kiosks

Informational kiosks are used by students and/or employees to post announcements. The intent is to encourage kiosk use for posting material, thus discouraging posting on other inappropriate campus features (e.g., bus shelters, buildings, bollards, etc.), detracting from the campus aesthetic. This will require locating kiosks strategically where students and employees will want materials to be seen.

Several concepts for the informational kiosk were developed and shared with the Wayfinding Committee. A single preferred concept was further developed.



*Typical Informational Kiosk (proposed)*

As a general guide, informational kiosks should be placed at the following locations:

- Trailheads to the cross-axial paths
- Main entrance to each residential dining hall/commons
- Library entrances
- Bus shelters
- On the Fairfield Mall

Note: Refer to map on page 11 for recommended locations of informational kiosks.

### Campus Maps

Campus maps are the most effective wayfinding tool because they are easily understood, can be used in a variety of ways, and can be produced in a variety of forms (e.g., outdoor signs, posters, Internet based, paper copy). The university uses different base graphics for its maps. This can confuse a visitor's orientation, especially when the maps are diagrammatic and visually distorted.

Recommendations:

- Adopt a single common base graphic upon which relevant information is overlaid. The three-dimensional illustration of campus used for most of the current campus maps should be developed further as the common base. Phase out the two-dimensional and distorted map of campus used to show transit routes.
- Use color or ink saturation to separate the information from the base graphic.

This common base graphic should be amenable to being reproduced in the following formats:

#### Outdoor Sign Maps



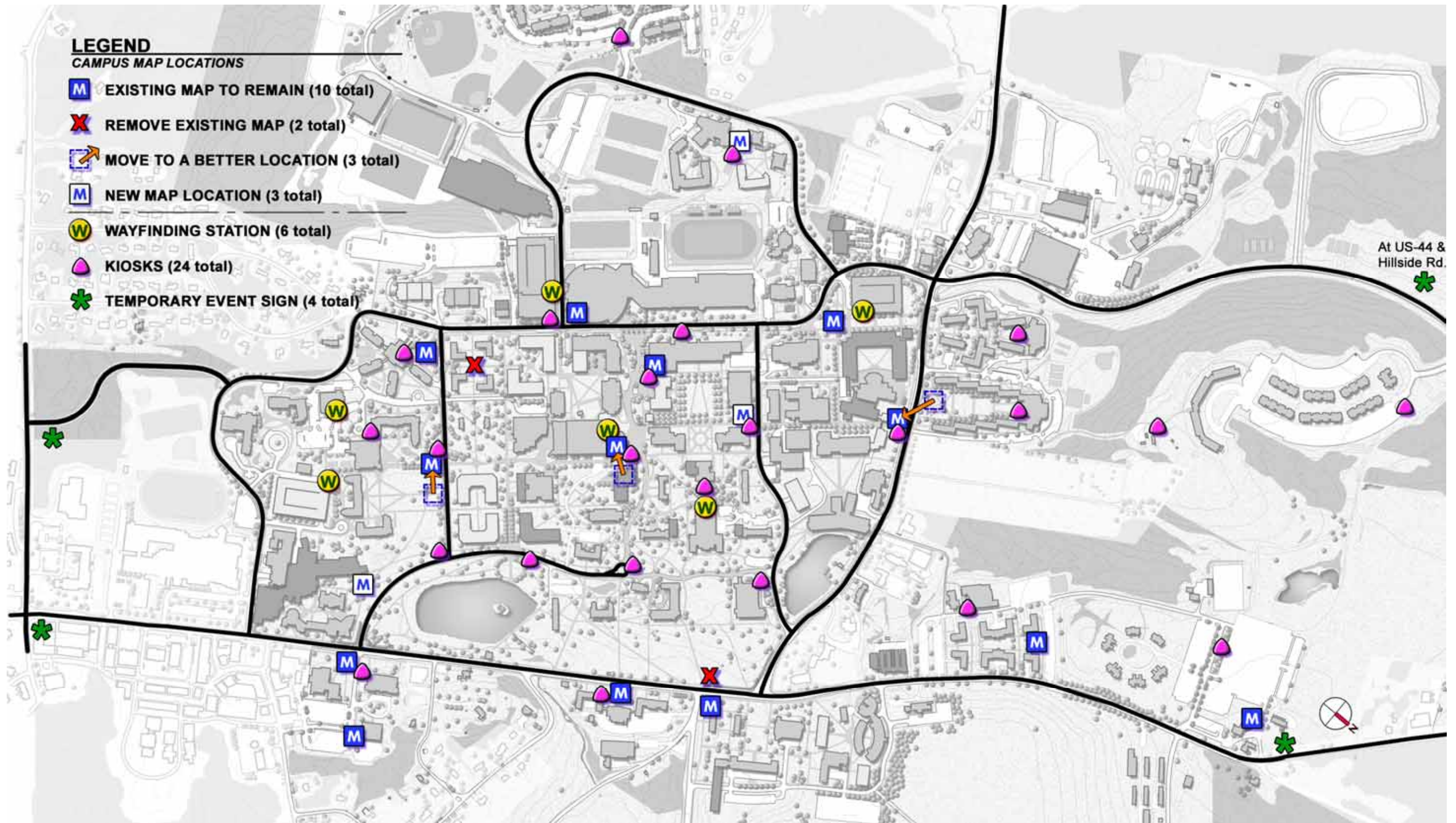
Most outdoor sign maps are located strategically across the campus. Some will need to be relocated, as their present locations may not be optimal, or proposed changes to the campus as contained in the Campus Master Plan Update will create the need for maps to be placed at new locations.

These maps need to be easy to update so that they reflect changes to the campus as they occur. Present day technology allows for these maps to be reprinted with updates in a relatively inexpensive manner.

As a general guide, large campus maps would be placed at:

- Central locations within residential neighborhoods, preferably at dining hall entrances.
- Trailheads to the cross-axial paths.
- Homer Babbidge Library entrance.
- Major visitor destinations.

Note: Refer to map on page 11 for recommended locations of large campus maps.



*Campus Map, Wayfinding Station, and Informational Kiosk Locations*



#### Interior Wall-Mounted Maps

These maps are a quick reference for visitors who have just parked their vehicles at a parking facility and need orientation to their final campus destination or are already on campus and need orientation to their next destination.

Typically, smaller campus maps are relatively inexpensive to update and print. They are approximately 36 inches wide and 24 inches tall, and may be placed within a vandal-proof transparent case that is weather resistant and securely mounted to a wall. Necessary measures are also needed to prevent the map from fading.

As a general guide, small campus maps should be placed at the following locations where they are conveniently available to visitors for reference:

- Egress level of all garage stairwells
- All wayfinding stations
- All bus shelters

### Paper Maps

Paper maps are conveniently sized, are inexpensive to reproduce, and can be made available both as a hard copy at multiple on-campus locations and in electronic format for visitors to download from a website and print in advance of arriving on campus.

Presently, different versions of these paper maps serve different purposes. The general campus map, the most common of all of these, includes the location of all of the University of Connecticut system campuses within the state along with primary regional access routes and a building location map. A separate paper map highlights residence and dining halls, and another map on a different base shows transit routes.

Given the multiple advantages of paper maps, the following recommendations are included for the design and production of paper maps:

- Create a new campus map that contains information pertinent to the Storrs Campus only.
- Establish a common base that is easily recognized. Use the same base for the large and small campus maps.
- Highlight visitor destinations in a “quick view” manner.
- Integrate transit information.

### Building Identification Signs

A building identification sign is typically located at the building’s main entry. It usually contains the formal name of the building, a street address, and the institution’s insignia. Building identification signs serve to inform pedestrians and are oriented perpendicular to the primary approach so that they are easily read from a distance. The sign type, size, color, and message style are standard for an institution.

At the present time, most buildings on campus follow a standard convention for building identification. It is important that consistency be adhered to for all of these signs.

Recommendations:

- Locate at all major building entrances.
- Orient perpendicular to the building façade.
- Size appropriate to the pedestrian scale.



*Typical Building Identification*



### *Temporary Event Signs*

Event signs serve to inform the campus visitor and the campus community of ongoing campus events. This supplements information available in print form or electronic form on the university website. A standard or system for posting temporary event signs is required so that poorly designed or constructed signs do not present an undesirable university image.

There is no standard for temporary event signs. Multiple devices including sandwich boards, banners, and flyers serve to announce and advertise campus events. The lack of conformity of these signs creates visual clutter; hence, a standard for such signs is required.

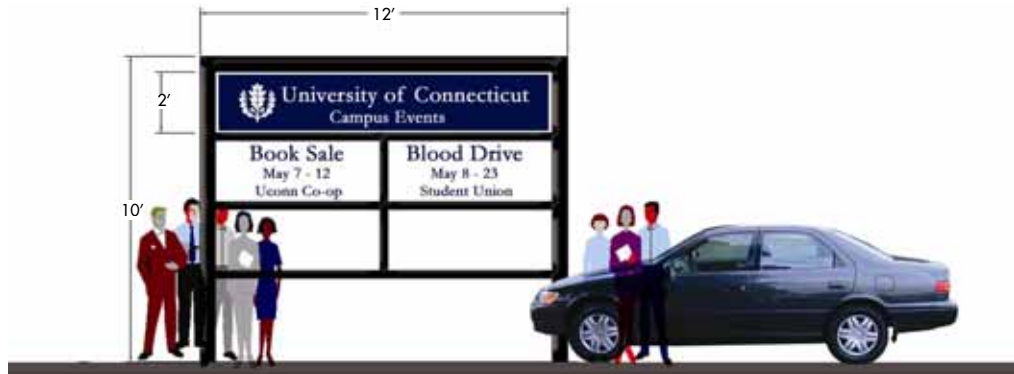
#### Recommendations:

- Develop a standard design for temporary event sign structures that is similar in material and character to the building signs and can accommodate multiple signs, as illustrated on the following page.
- Select standard inset panels that are durable, reusable, and inexpensive to replace.
- Ensure that the signs are easily read from a passing vehicle.
- Assign university staff to assemble and manage all signs.
- Implement an application and approval process for all temporary event signs (approval required by University Communications).

Note: Refer to map on page 11 for recommended locations of temporary event signs.

These recommendations will allow for appropriate signs with the “UConn” signature or text at predetermined locations. However, this will create additional responsibility and budget increases for the department administering the signs.





*Temporary Sign Concept*

In addition, the possibility of using outdoor electronic signs was explored. Messages can be programmed from a central location to a remote sign. Upon further research, it was found that flat panels cannot be used in outdoor conditions. An alternative option is LED signs (Light Emitting Diode technology) that form the giant screens in outdoor arenas and other large venues. The cost of these screens is high given the additional safeguards that must be built in to withstand weather and temperature changes. The university must carefully consider the viability of such technologies given the high initial cost and long-term maintenance needs.

