

Connecting the Dots: SMART Pathway Wayfinding

September 2026

Zoe Unruh, SMART



What is the role of SMART?

The Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District (SMART) is a special transit district responsible for planning, constructing, and operating passenger rail and a parallel multi-use pathway between Sonoma and Marin counties



What is our system?

TODAY

39 miles of pathway

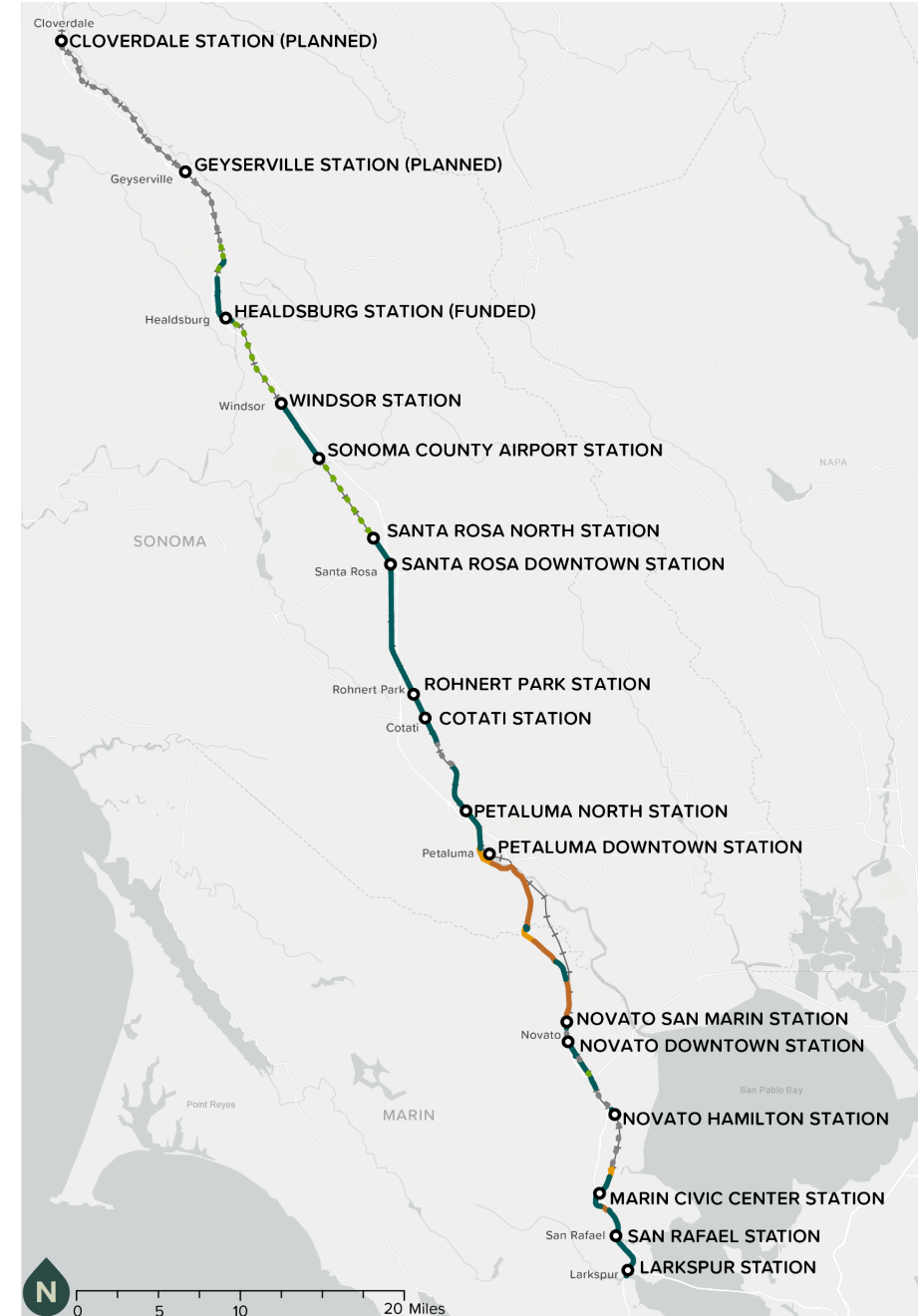
48 miles of rail

14 stations

TOMORROW

70 miles of rail and pathway

17 stations at build-out



What is the role of the pathway?

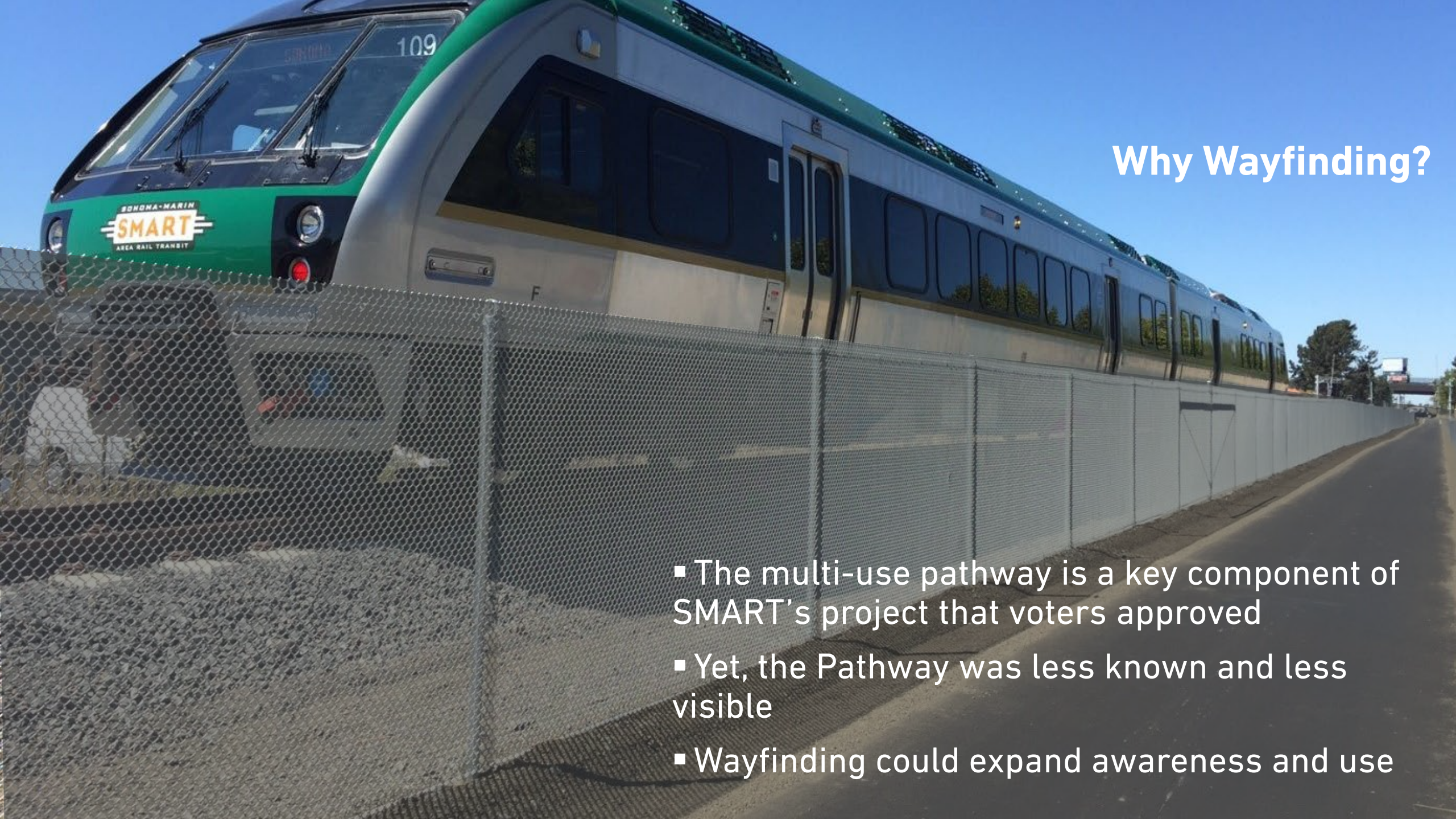
Function as a north-south spine of the active transportation network between Marin and Sonoma

Serve as the southern segment of the Great Redwood Trail

Act as a rail safety feature

Offer a first/last mile facility for connecting to the train





Why Wayfinding?

- The multi-use pathway is a key component of SMART's project that voters approved
- Yet, the Pathway was less known and less visible
- Wayfinding could expand awareness and use

Project Goals:

1

Visibility and awareness

2

Improve navigation

3

Strengthen the connection between the rail and pathway

4

Strengthen the connection between the pathway and the surrounding areas

5

Enhance safety and confidence

Conditions, Challenges, and Considerations:

1

On- and off-street conditions

2

Multiple identities and jurisdictions

3

Strengthen the connection between the rail and pathway

4

Needing a system that works for different contexts

5

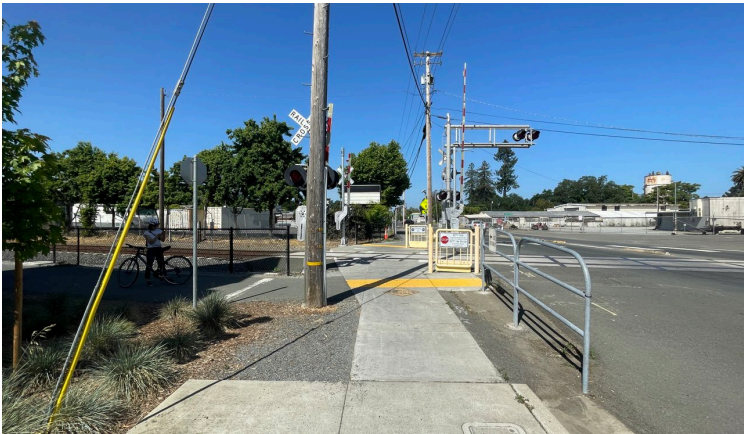
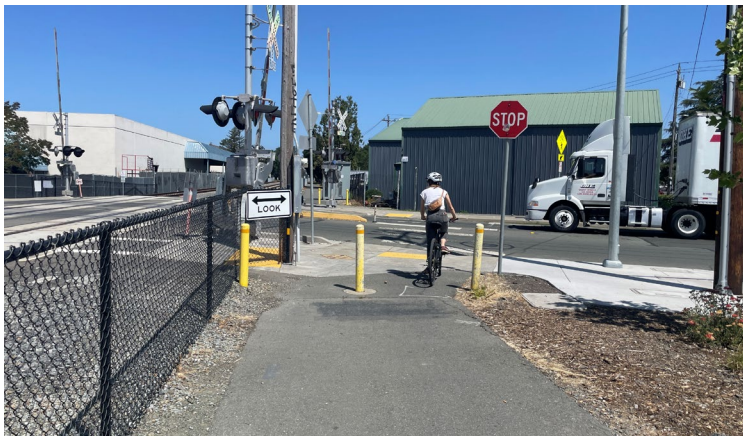
Constrained environments

6

Easy to maintain

Validating Through Fieldwork







LIGHTPOSTS

BIKE LOCKER ZONE

FENCING

NARROW BORDERS



User Feedback

Intercept Survey

Virtual Workshop

Demonstration Sites



Mock-up signs in the field in Larkspur



11 days to
view and
comment



395
responses

Wayfinding Best Practices:

1

Keep it Simple

2

Be Consistent

3

Design for the Inexperienced User

4

Be Inclusive

5

Make Connections

6

Consider Existing Facilities

A Modular Approach

1

≡ SMART ≡
PATHWAY

← Destination 0.9 MI

← Destination Long Name 2.2 MI

1.4 MI Destination →

THE GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL

3



4



5



6



7



8



9

MAR SHOWN FOR
PLACEMENT
ONLY

≡ SMART PATHWAY ≡

Frosty Lane
BEL MARIN KEYS

15 Maintain a safe speed of 15 mph or less

V Yield to pedestrians

E Keep right, pass left: Give warning when passing

C Leash your dog

P Remove pet waste

A Pay attention to surroundings

THE GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL

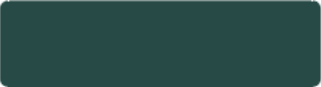
Designed by AGENCY 001 02 1881
For temporary placement, Cal RT

2



A Modular Approach

1


3





4






8

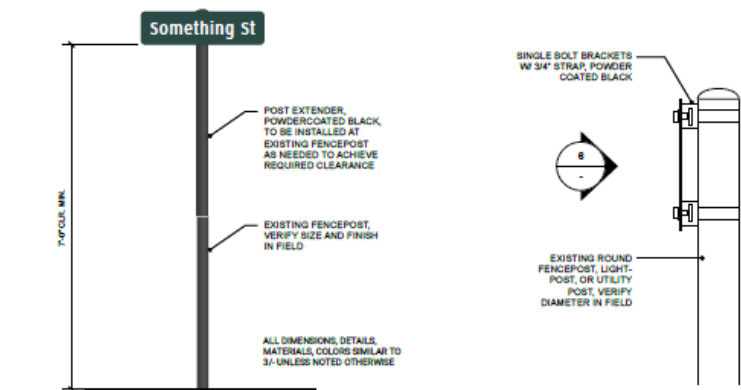


OPTIONAL SCOPE D: ATTIC STOCK	INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS DELIVERED BOXED AND LABELED WITH HARDWARE FOR FUTURE USE: <u>D1:</u> (20) SMART LOGO PANELS WITH ALL ARTWORK (20) GRT LOGO PANELS WITH ALL ARTWORK (30) DESTINATION PANELS, BLANK <u>D11A:</u> (10) SIGN PANELS WITH ALL ARTWORK <u>D11B:</u> (10) SIGN PANELS WITH ALL ARTWORK <u>D3:</u> (10) SIGN BLANKS <u>PG:</u> (30) PREFORMED THERMOPLASTIC SYMBOLS USING PRIMARY ARTWORK <u>PI:</u> (20) LOGO PANELS WITH ALL ARTWORK (20) DESTINATION PANELS, BLANK <u>PIB:</u> (10) SMART LOGO PANELS WITH ALL ARTWORK <u>PT:</u> (6) TOPPERS WITH LOGO ARTWORK (6) TOPPERS, BLANK (20) DESTINATION PANELS, PAINTED AND WITH ARROWS APPLIED, INCLUDING BRACKET HARDWARE (4) INFO PANELS, PAINTED BUT WITHOUT ARTWORK <u>R1:</u> (6) SIGN PANELS WITH ALL ARTWORK <u>R2:</u> (6) SIGN PANELS WITH ALL ARTWORK <u>R3:</u> (2) SIGN PANELS WITH ALL ARTWORK
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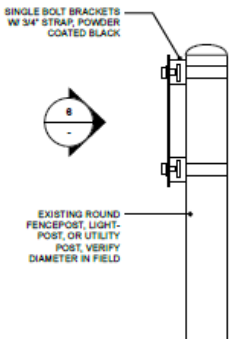
A Modular Approach



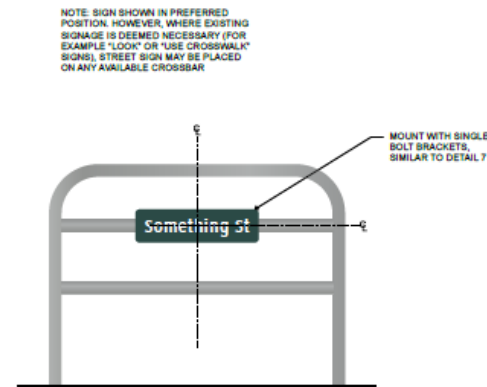
Flexible Mounting



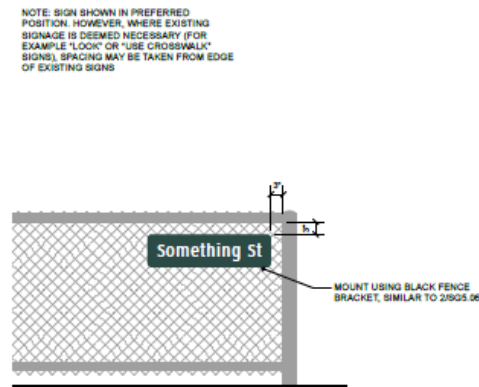
6 CONTEXT ELEVATION, ROUND POST
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"



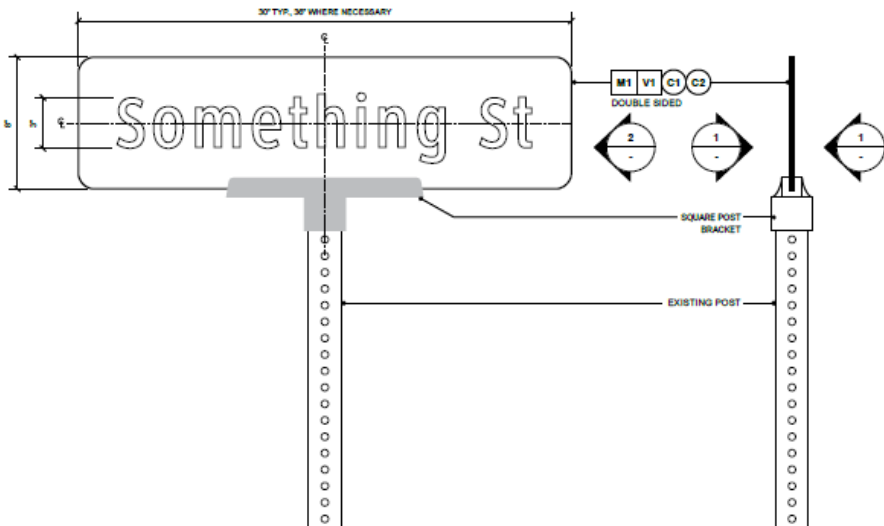
7 SIDE VIEW, ROUND POST
SCALE: 3" = 1'-0"



8 CONTEXT ELEVATION, BARRICADE
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"

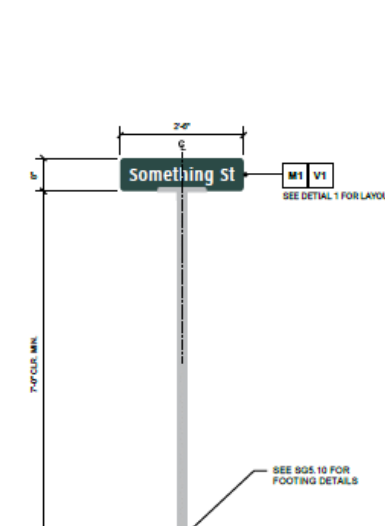


8 CONTEXT ELEVATION, EXISTING FENCE
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"

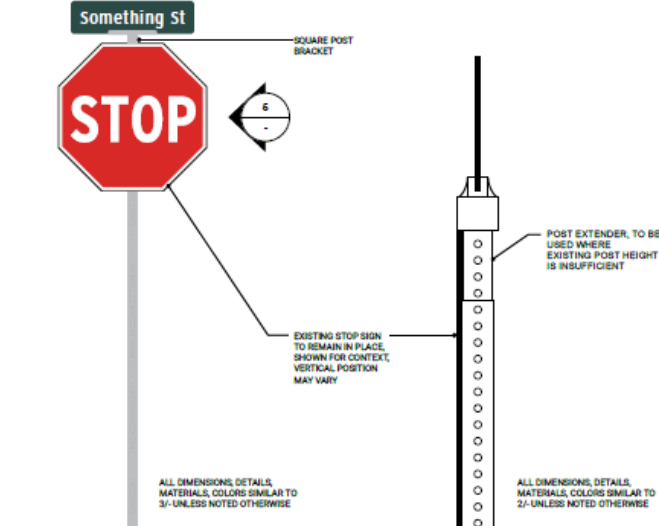


1 SIGN LAYOUT
SCALE: 3" = 1'-0"

2 SIDE VIEW, NEW POST
SCALE: 3" = 1'-0"



3 CONTEXT ELEVATION, NEW POST
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"



4 CONTEXT ELEVATION W/ EXISTING STOP SIGN
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"

5 SIDE VIEW, W/ STOP SIGN
SCALE: 3" = 1'-0"

REV	DATE	BY	SUB	APP	DESCRIPTION

TOOLE
DESIGN

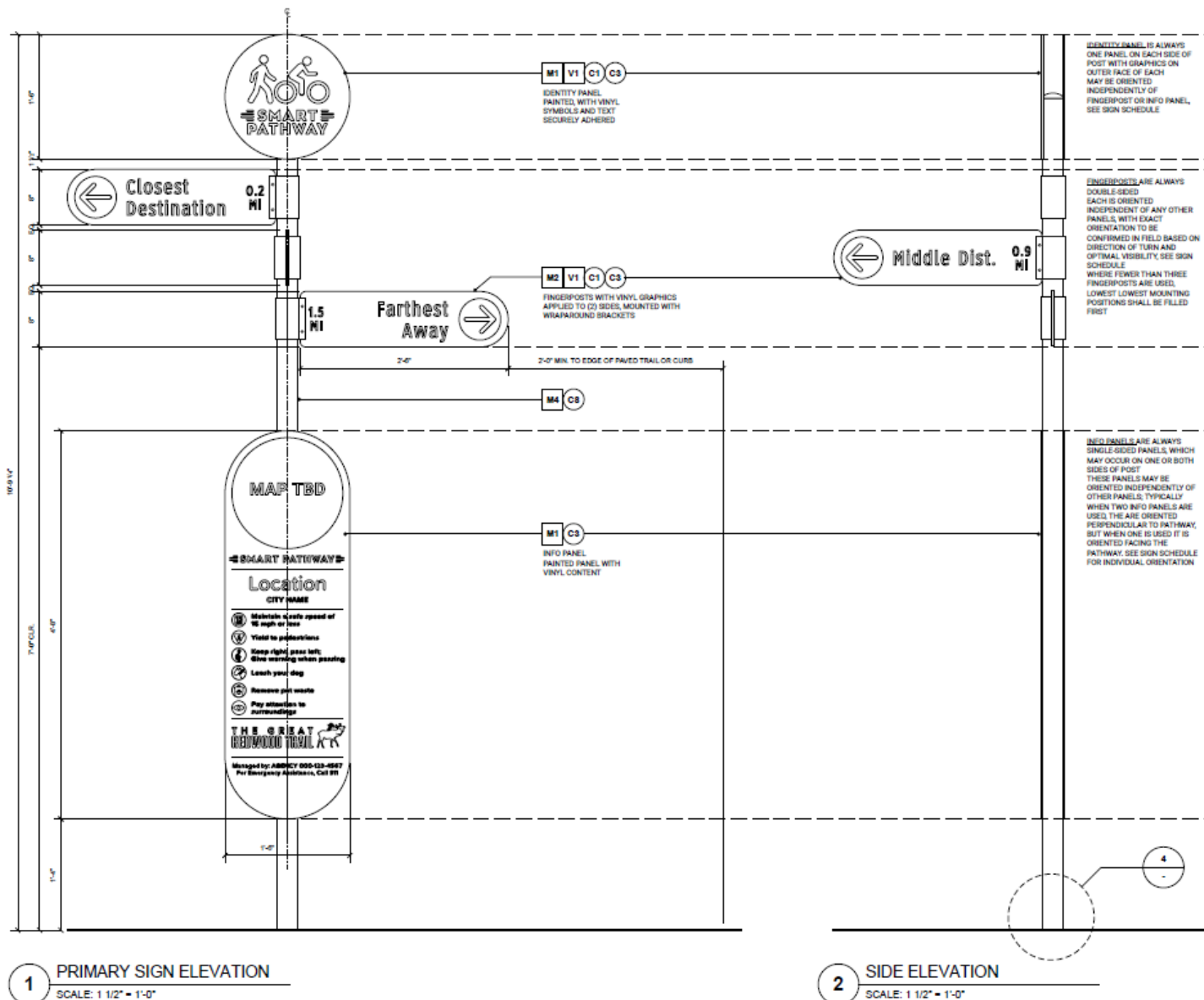
PREPARED BY	
DRAWN BY	E.W.
CHECKED BY	K.L.
IN CHARGE	
DATE	4/30/2024

MILE 14.7 TO 85.4

PHASE 1 PLACEMENT PLAN



SMART PATHWAY WAYFINDING	CADD FILENAME	N/A
SIGN TYPE D3: STREET SIGN	SCALE	AS NOTED
LARKSPUR TO CLOVERDALE SHEET 91 OF 124	AS NOTED	CONTRACT NO. FL-P8-23-001
	DWG. NO.	MILEPOST
	SG5.01	-



REV	DATE	BY	SUN	APR	DESCRIPTION

TOOLE
DESIGN

PREPARED BY	E.W.
CHECKED BY	K.L.
IN CHARGE	
DATE	4/30/2024

MILE 14.7 TO 85.4

PHASE 1 PLACEMENT PLAN



SMART PATHWAY WAYFINDING

SIGN TYPE PT: PATHWAY TRAILHEAD

LARKSPUR TO CLOVERDALE
SHEET 96 OF 124

CADD FILENAME	N/A
SCALE	CONTRACT NO.
AS NOTED	PL-P0-23-001
DWG. NO.	MILEPOST
SG5.08	-

REMEMBER TO ORIENT MAPS “HEADS-UP”

Map Strategy



TRAIL MAP

Shows entire Pathway, connections to Railway



AREA MAP

Shows 1/2 mile radius from Trailhead, including connecting routes and destinations



GAP MAP

Shows the highest-comfort, most direct route across gaps in the Pathway

Map Strategy



TRAIL MAP



Individual blades can be updated as needed when Pathway gaps are filled

16" map round printed on vinyl and applied to sign panel to make planned map updates easier

Results

Installed over 400 signs
on the Pathway









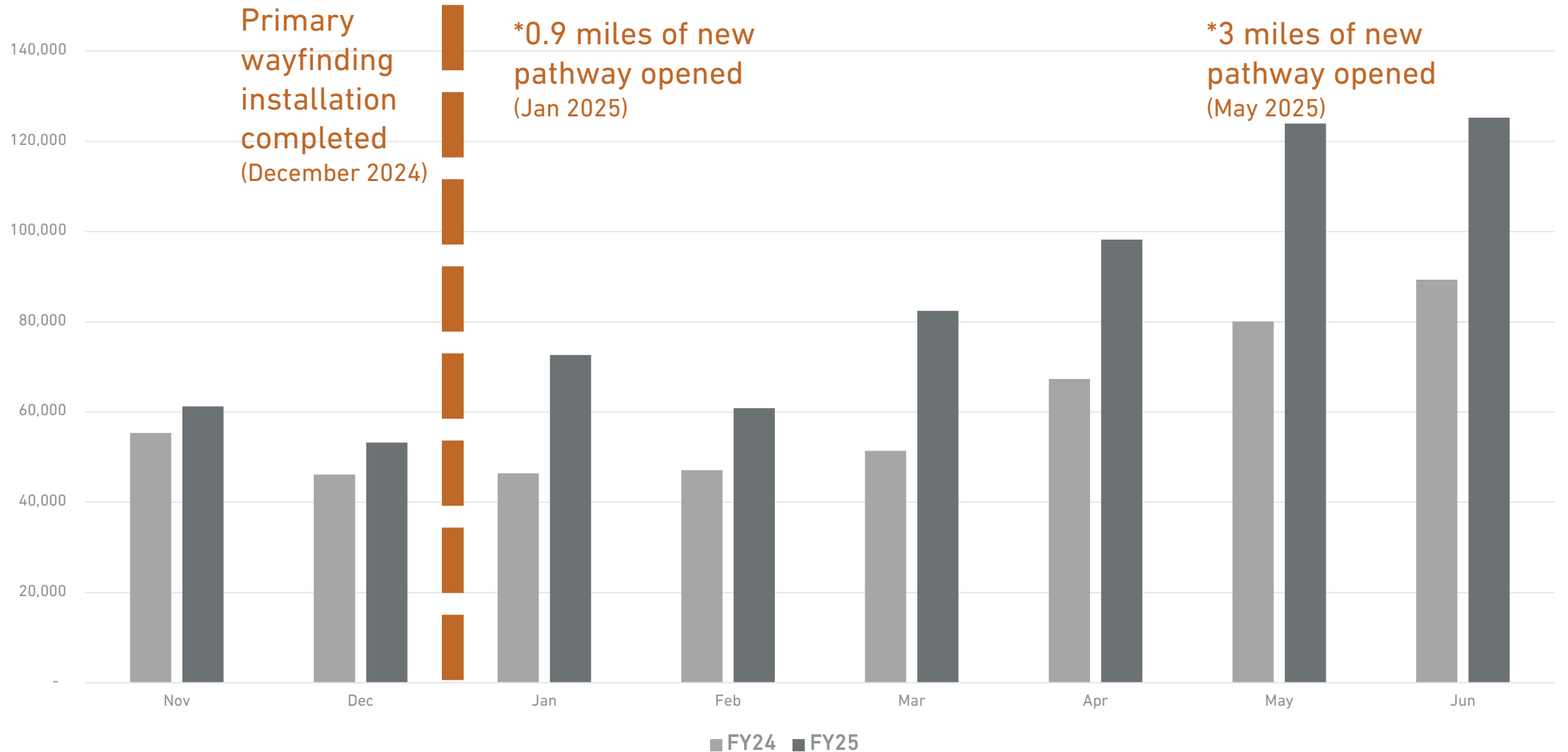
What is the role of Wayfinding in terms of safety?

Noticing pathway rules, including speed restrictions and safe behavior expectations for users

Creating a more legible system allows people to navigate it with confidence



SMART Pathway Counts (pre and post wayfinding)



→ Questions?

← Ferry 0.6 MI

← Marin Cntry Mart 0.3 MI

2.1 MI Downtown San Rafael →

SMART PATHWAY

Larkspur
SMART STATION

- Maintain a safe speed of 15 mph or less
- Yield to pedestrians
- Keep right, pass left: Give warning when passing
- Leash your dog
- Remove pet waste
- Pay attention to surroundings

THE GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL

Managed by
SMART (800) 734-3330
For Emergency Assistance,
Call 911