



GETTING AROUND THE PARK



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Finding one's way around Elysian Park is challenging, even to those who know the Park well. The reasons why are primarily due to the Park's location, the fragmentation of its lands, and the tangle of freeways and railways that wrap the Park.

Each major entryway into Elysian Park has a completely different look and feel due to the complexity of the topography and the differing characters of the communities that border the Park. In addition, the road design, entrances and exits from the freeways, and their associated signage are geared to accessing Dodger Stadium rather than identifying the Park.

All these factors elevate the importance of Park circulation to both pedestrian and motorist. All visitors arriving at Elysian Park should be able to easily locate park facilities and access the natural environment. While in Elysian Park, people need to feel safe and be able to relax in the park surroundings. The process of getting around the Park should be an integral part of a great park experience.

Given that circulation is of primary concern to the local community and is the basic infrastructure that supports all Park activities, this chapter includes plans of actions and recommendations for:

- ROADS AND TRAFFIC
- PARKING
- TRAILS, CROSSINGS & STAIRWAYS
- SIGNS—WAYFINDING, LOCATION IDENTIFICATION AND TRAIL MARKERS
- GATEWAYS INTO THE PARK

ACTION PLAN

The primary focus and intent of recommendations for Park circulation and getting around the Park is to increase safety for all park users. Secondary to this is ease of park utilization so that the Park environment makes sense both from a wayfinding perspective and also how facilities are organized and designed. In addition, each recommended action will strengthen the aesthetic of the Park by providing a cohesiveness and some uniformity and rhythm to the Park road and trail experience, so that Elysian Park visitors can enjoy the unique features of the Park to the fullest.

ACTION ITEMS ARE:

Roads and Traffic

- Modify Stadium Way from the Riverside Drive to Academy Road to provide pedestrian access from Elysian Valley, increase park user safety, reduce speeds, and provide a park road aesthetic.
- Standardize park road lane width. Reduce roadside parking except at designated areas.

Pod Parking

- Develop small parking lots (pod parking) in designated areas along park roads adjacent to trailheads, picnic areas, and viewpoints.
- Develop parking opportunities throughout the park that will support full utilization of all park facilities (see *Recreation and Fun*).

Trails, Crossings & Stairways

- Develop a premier system of trails for a variety of experiences that utilizes the entire Park.
- Connect the existing trail system together within the Park with the addition of bridges, road crossings, walkways, stairways, and additional trails.
- Connect trails within the Park to existing or future trails and access points outside the Park (see *The Parkland*).



Signs–Wayfinding, Location Identification and Trail Markers

- Expand the existing wayfinding and interpretive signage plans approved by Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department for Elysian Park.
- Provide trailhead signage and trail mileage markers throughout the Park trail system.

Gateways into the Park

- Provide entry signage at identified locations to Elysian Park.

ROADS AND TRAFFIC

Stadium Way

Unsafe conditions created by high traffic speeds along the Stadium Way through Elysian Park have been ranked by the community as the number one priority for modification. Although the road is using

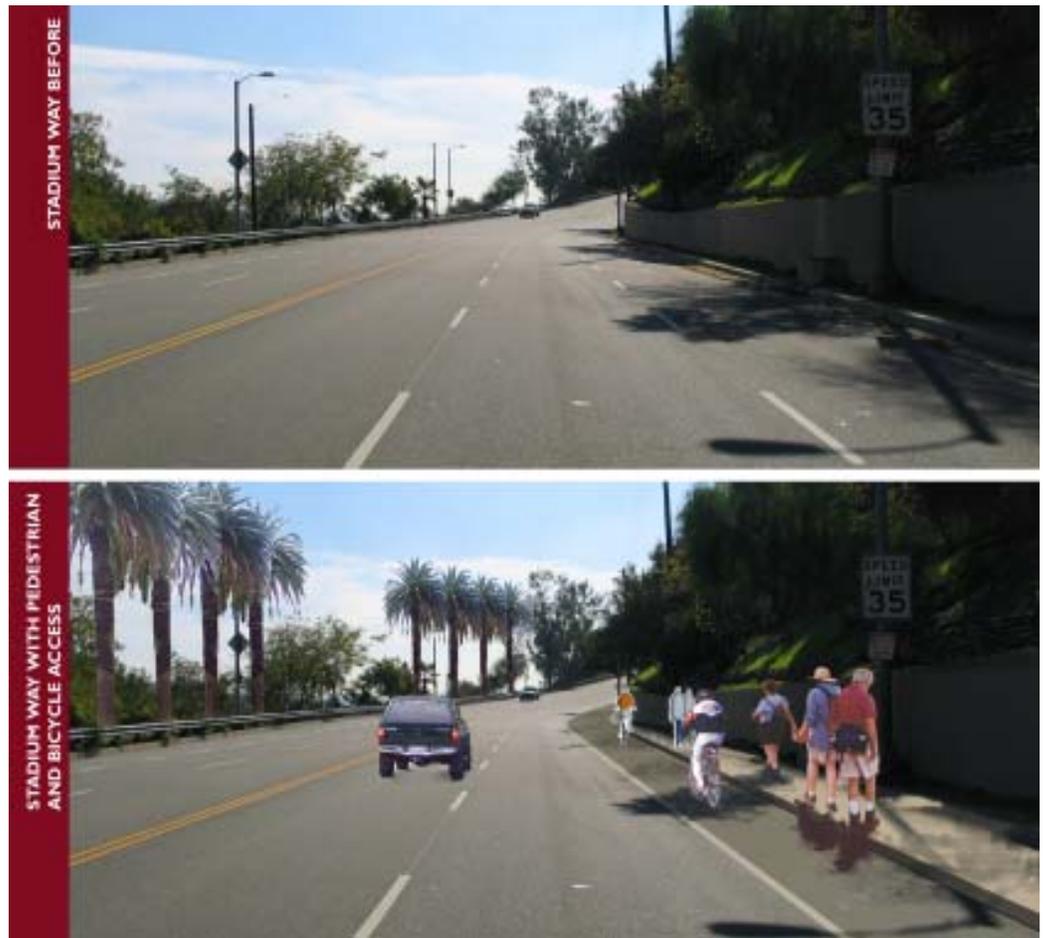
parkland, the six lane roadway serves as the main entry and exit route to Dodger Stadium from the I-5, and is utilized as a commuter route to downtown Los Angeles. The road is classified as a secondary highway and is designed to carry high traffic volumes at higher speeds than roads designated solely for park use. The rise in grade plus higher travel speeds creates hazardous conditions for Park users. Pedestrian crosswalks, sidewalks, and bicycle path(s) for Park users are non-existent.

The excessive width of the roadway was designed to facilitate high exiting traffic volumes from Dodger Stadium. Currently there are 6 lanes of traffic; 3 lanes in each direction. Department of Transportation standards require 2 lanes, not 3 lanes, in each direction be available at all times for regular weekday commuter traffic to downtown. Potentially, Stadium Way could be reduced by 2 lanes to accommodate bicycle lanes both ways and a pedestrian walkway.

FIG.2-1, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS ON STADIUM WAY

STADIUM WAY CURRENTLY HAS THREE LANES OF TRAFFIC IN EACH DIRECTION. THE PHOTO ABOVE WAS TAKEN NEAR THE STADIUM WAY EXIT FROM THE 5 FREEWAY, LOOKING SOUTH INTO THE PARK. SEE LANE DIAGRAM, FIG. 2-2.

ILLUSTRATED BELOW, ONE LANE HAS BEEN CLOSED TO ALLOW FOR PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE USE.



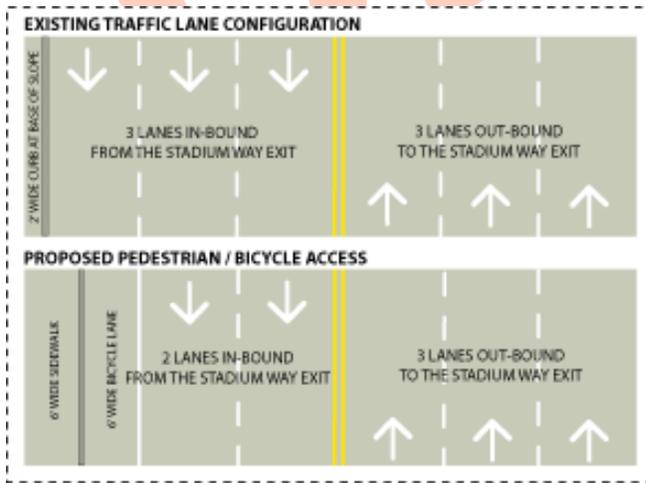


Recommendations:

Stadium Way must be transformed from a single-use highway for automobiles, to a multi-purpose transportation corridor that supports bicycles, pedestrians, Park users, shuttle buses, and other forms of transportation that allows the surrounding neighborhoods to easily access their nearby Park.

Permanent closure of one traffic lane is recommended. Due to adjacent vertical slopes and retaining walls at various locations along Stadium Way, further expansion of the highway corridor to make room for walkways and bicycle paths is neither feasible or desirable.

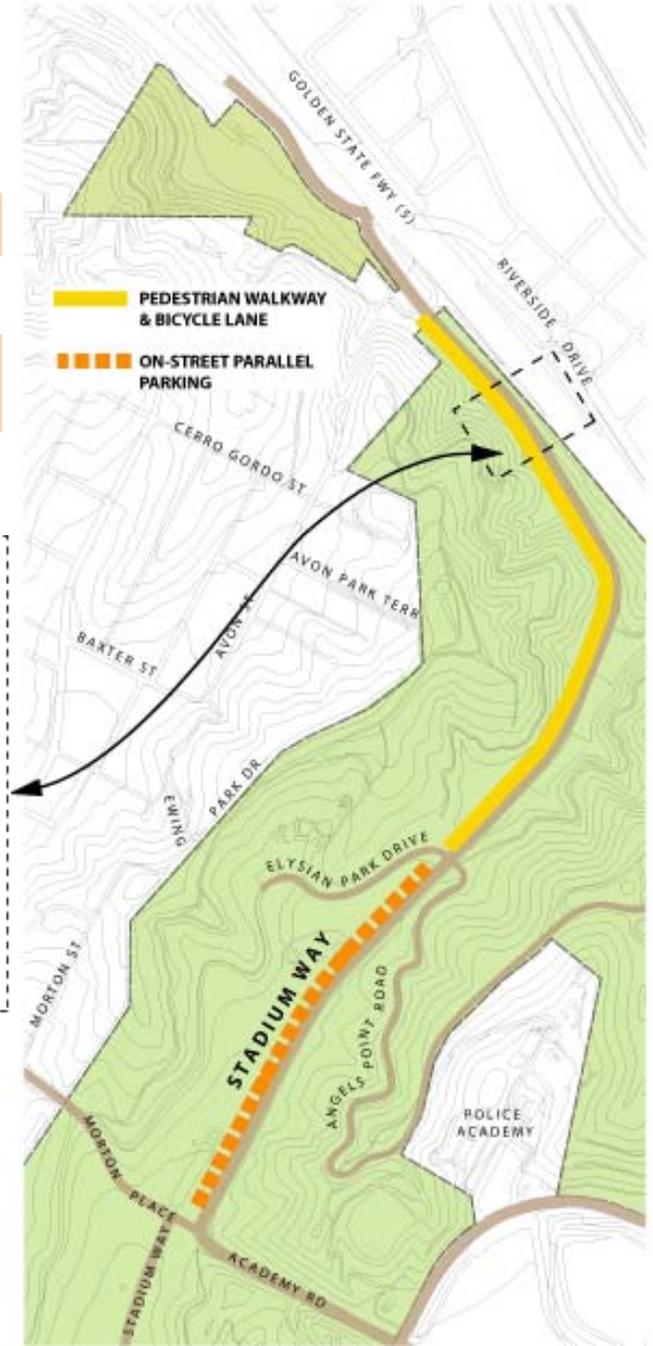
FIG.2-2, STADIUMWAY LANE RECONFIGURATION DIAGRAM



The reconfiguration of Stadium Way from six lanes to five lanes allows for three lanes exiting Dodger Stadium during events and a minimum of two lanes each way for commuter traffic. Additional Park parking could be made available during non-event days by turning the extra exiting lane into a flexible lane that allows for parking.

The addition of a pedestrian walkway will connect the recently acquired Elysian Park 18 Acre Expansion site on Riverside Drive and continue up Stadium Way into the main body of the park to the proposed crosswalk at Elysian Park Drive. This walkway will also provide a critical pedestrian linkage to the Los Angeles River parkway corridor, Griffith Park, and to Rio De Los Angeles State Park (Taylor Yard Park) on the east side of the Los Angeles River.

FIG.2-3, STADIUMWAY IMPROVEMENTS



THE PROPOSED LANE CLOSURE ON STADIUMWAY, FROM THE 5 FREEWAY EXIT TO ELYSIAN PARK DRIVE, WOULD ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY AND A CLASS 2 BICYCLE LANE. SEE FIG. 2-2, LANE RECONFIGURATION DIAGRAM.

FROM ELYSIAN PARK DRIVE TO ACADEMY ROAD THE CLOSED LANE WOULD BE USED FOR ON-STREET PARALLEL PARKING.



A Class II bicycle lane as shown above will also provide alternative transportation opportunities into Elysian Park from this major entry point. Additional public transportation opportunities should be provided throughout the Park that will allow easy access to Park facilities and to Dodger Stadium.

- Reduce Stadium Way width by one vehicular lane. Permanently eliminate one southbound lane.
- Provide pedestrian walkway on Stadium Way connecting Riverside Drive to Elysian Park Drive, and connecting the new Park expansion area to the rest of the Park.
- Provide a Class II bicycle lane from Riverside Drive up Stadium Way to Academy Road.
- Provide parking opportunity from Elysian Park Drive to Academy Road with southbound lane closure.



FIG. 2-4, PARK DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS

AN EXAMPLE OF PARK DRIVE RENOVATION NEAR THE RESERVOIR WITH A DEFINED TRAIL ALONG THE EDGE OF ROAD.

- Provide one lane northbound for flexible parallel parking except during Dodger Stadium events (option).
- Establish bus stops and bus routes through Elysian Park (see Fig. 2-9, Park Entrances and Gateways).

Standardize Park Road Lane Widths

Road widths vary throughout the Park, leaving room for vehicles to park along the side of the roadway in many locations. This situation allows vice to occur in the bushes and on non-legitimate trails in remote sections of the Park. These conditions act as a real deterrent for legitimate Park users and contributes to the underutilization of Park facilities.

Recommendations:

Using the renovated roadway to Buena Vista Point as an approved design standard, Elysian Park’s deteriorating internal roadway system will be improved.

- Standardize Park road width to 11 foot lanes (one in each direction). Resurface deteriorated Park roads, define the roadway edge on one or both sides with large boulders.
- Provide a decomposed granite running trail adjacent to roadway where width allows. An interim solution would site boulders at the road edge, leaving the excess asphalt for the trail surface.
- Remove excess asphalt and restore areas with native planting and barrier plantings as necessary (see *The Parkland* and Appendix A for restoration plant lists).

POD PARKING

Large paved parking lots are currently located adjacent to the expanses of relatively flat turf areas of Elysian Park. These parking lots are heavily used due to the layout of the Park as active recreational facilities are bunched into these valley areas.

Passive recreational areas within Elysian Park rely on roadside parking, or pod parking. Pod parking is defined as a small grouping of 6 to 8 vehicle parking



FIG.2-5,
POD PARKING

TURNOUTS ALONG ANGELS POINT DRIVE ARE TYPICALLY WIDE, UNDEFINED AREAS OF ASPHALT. THESE WILL BE RENOVATED TO PROVIDE POD PARKING AT TRAIL HEADS WITH RESTORED NATIVE PLANTINGS.

spaces that can fit into a relatively small area at scenic viewpoints, or trailheads. An example of pod parking has already been developed and implemented at the Buena Vista viewpoint.

Recommendations:

The overuse of some parking areas and the underutilization of others can be balanced by developing small parking opportunities at more facilities throughout the Park.

- Develop pod parking adjacent to new facilities along Elysian Park roads (see *Recreation and Fun* for new facilities).
- Provide one lane along Stadium Way for flexible parallel parking except during Dodger Stadium events (option).
- Open the Leo Politi parking lot for general public use.





- Remove asphalt at Leo Politi parking lot and provide permeable decomposed granite and/or gravel with boulder edge spaced to delineate parking stalls.
- Install permeable material in future parking lots only in areas where drainage will not cause erosion problems.
- Eliminate red painted curbs throughout the Park as a design standard to signify a no parking zone. Provide parking signage “No Parking” instead as necessary.



BUENA VISTA OVERLOOK

TRAILS, CROSSINGS & STAIRWAYS

Trails

The existing trail system in Elysian Park is a highly valuable resource to the community. Local park visitors are using trails regularly as part of their recreational experience.

There is a history of equestrian use in Elysian Park and surrounding neighborhoods. Elysian Park will remain open to horses. There are also equestrian trails and facilities in Griffith Park and regional trail systems such as the Rim of the Valley Trail that should be linked wherever possible to Elysian Park. Refer to Fig. 3-2, Los Angeles River Regional Open Space.

Recreation and Parks has created a guide map for Elysian Park wildflower walks and other points of interest. Some of the trails have been named which should be expanded as part of a wayfinding tool for the Park (see Signs - Wayfinding below). Trails

adjacent to the Chavez Ravine Arboretum are most utilized for on-leash dog walking. Recreation and Parks (RAP) mandates dogs are on-leash at all times, and no bicycles on dirt trails.

A perception that some trails, specifically the ridgeline trails on the north side of Elysian Park, are unsafe is exacerbated by poor trailbed conditions, trash dumping, and vice activity which has led to harassment of runners utilizing the trail.

Recommendations:

Topographic and scenic variety throughout the Park, plus the location of Elysian Park to downtown Los Angeles provides the setting to create a network of premier Park trail experiences that attract runners, hikers, and families from the greater Los Angeles region.

Elysian Park can capitalize on this magnificent diversity of scenic vistas, ridgelines, and valleys by expanding and upgrading the network of multi-use trails. Each trail may have a theme and a name, specifically designed to attract people seeking specific experiences.

Provide loop and ridgeline trails that are challenging and interesting, short loops for families with children, and trails that connect one side of the Park to the other, effectively creating a system that knits the fragments of Elysian Park together and gives visitors the means to utilize all areas of the Park.

- Inventory existing trails for repair and development. Implement repairs.
- Develop loop trails for hiking and viewing. Provide a variety of experiences for recreation and education to attract families with children, and sightseers.
- Develop a ridgeline trail for runners and hikers with an emphasis on scenic views.
- Provide trail systems throughout the entire Park with trailheads and parking development on each end of the trail.
- Utilize park roads to develop asphalt trails or walks by narrowing park roads.
- Connect multi-use trail system to the most recently acquired 18-Acre Expansion.



- Install amenities to support each trail. These include trailhead information, signage, mileage markers, guide brochures or maps, plastic bags or mutt mits for dog waste pickup, and trash cans.
- Develop Recreation and Park directed community volunteer trail maintenance program (see *Taking Care of the Park*).

Crossings: Signalized Pedestrian Crosswalk across Stadium Way

There are currently no pedestrian crossings on Stadium Way. This overly wide highway effectively separates and isolates visitors who come to the west side to use the Park’s facilities and trails. To utilize the Park safely, Park visitors are forced to use their cars to drive from one side of Elysian Park to the other rather than walk across Stadium Way.

Recommendations:

A pedestrian activated, signalized crosswalk from Elysian Park Drive across to Angels Point Road is recommended. This crosswalk will connect trails on the west side of the Park with Angels Point and trails on the east side of Stadium Way (see Fig. 2-8, Proposed Trail System for crosswalk location).

Stadium Way should be reduced in width prior to the construction of the signalized crossing in order to reduce vehicle volume and speeds for maximum pedestrian safety while crossing.

- Implement signalized pedestrian activated road crossing across Stadium Way.

Crossings: Pedestrian Bridge across Academy Road from Angels Point to the Leo Politi Picnic Area

A pedestrian crossing at any location on Academy Road has been assessed by Department of Transportation as hazardous due to the existing configuration of the intersection of Academy Road and Stadium Way. A sidewalk on the right side of the arterial provides some pedestrian access from Chavez Ravine facilities to the rest of the park. However the arterials remain inhospitable to pedestrians and difficult to cross.

Recommendations:

A pedestrian bridge that connects Leo Politi to Angels Point would span Academy Road and provide the continuous trail system for runners, hikers, and park users who desire to walk from Chavez Ravine to other areas of the Park.

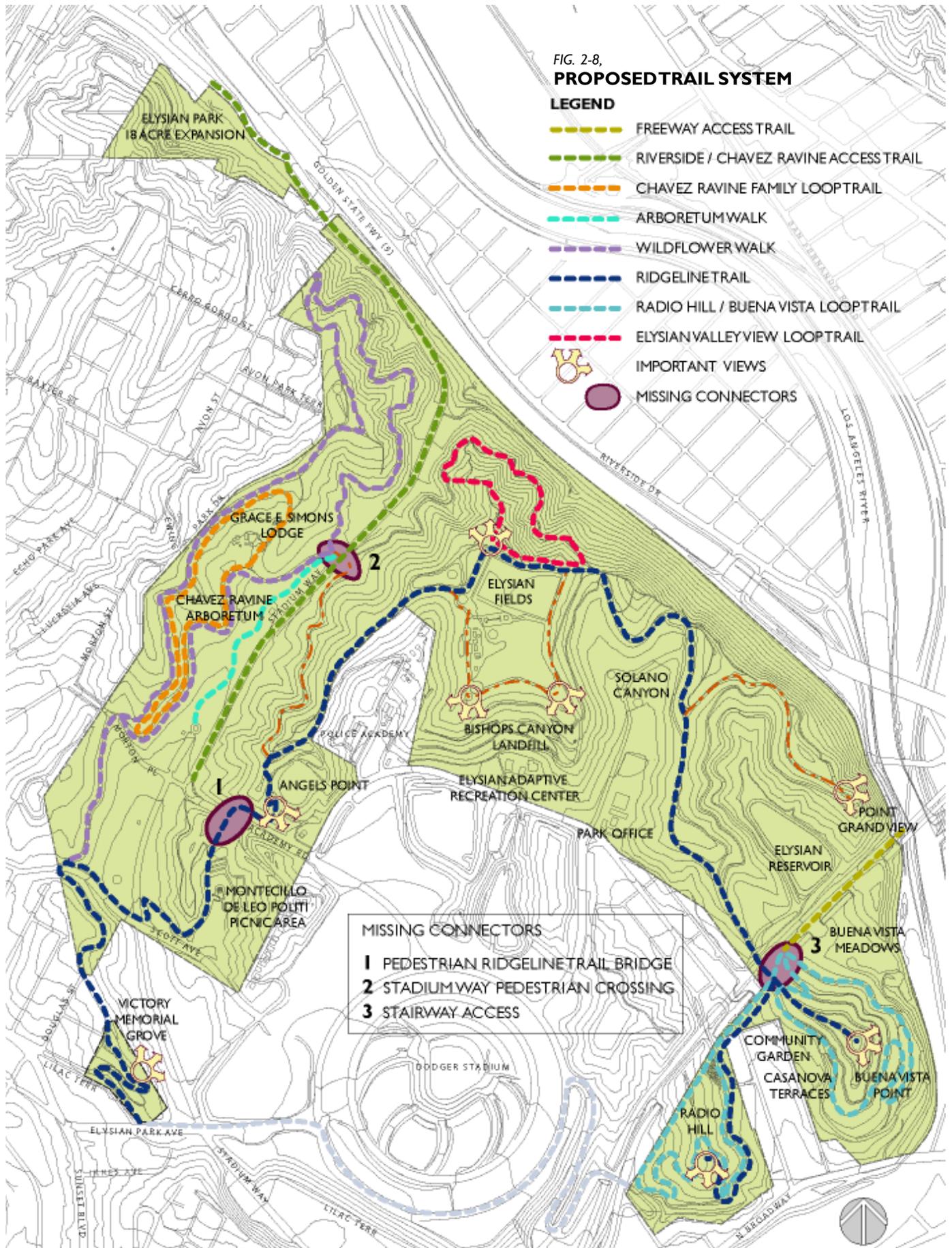
This bridge would contribute greatly to the aesthetics of Academy Road. Current conditions are bleak as Academy Road was placed through a sandstone hillside leaving no room for Park use. Overhead signage is an inappropriate scale in the Park, contributing to the uncomfortable feel of this road for a pedestrian Park user.

- Provide a pedestrian and running bridge across Academy Road that connects the proposed ridgeline trail from Angels Point to Leo Politi picnic area.
- Permanently remove overhead signage. Replace with approved Park signage system including street signs.



FIG. 2-7,
**TRAIL CONNECTION
OVER ACADEMY ROAD**

A TRAIL BRIDGE OVER ACADEMY ROAD WILL CONNECT ANGELS POINT TO THE LEO POLITI PICNIC AREA, AVOIDING THE HAZARD OF CROSSING THIS BUSY ARTERIAL.





Stairway: Park Stairway from the Freeway Access Trail to Buena Vista

An amazing access trail to Elysian Park that has been carefully preserved but rarely used is the Freeway Access Trail directly adjacent to the 110 Freeway. Its beginning point is a stairway along San Fernando Road. The trail then crosses the Los Angeles River to Elysian Park and continues all the way to Radio Hill to the edge of the Chinatown community.

Buena Vista Meadows is easily accessible from the Freeway Access Trail. The steep slope from the meadow area to Buena Vista Point requires a zigzag trail or stairway or both.

Recommendations:

- Provide a stairway from the existing Freeway Access Trail on the southwest side of Buena Vista Meadows up to Park Row Drive.
- Provide signs and trail markers at both ends, and at every trail crossing. Provide a ‘You are Here’ map sign at each trail entrance and at the Buena Vista Meadows parking area.
- Work with CalTrans to permanently remove homeless under the trail at Radio Hill near Chinatown and keep the area sanitary.

SIGNS—WAYFINDING, LOCATION IDENTIFICATION AND TRAIL MARKERS

A consistent, well defined system of wayfinding and location signage is a missing element in Elysian Park. It is difficult to identify what areas are parkland. This is exacerbated by the lack of identifying markers.

Recommendations:

Wayfinding is key to providing the fullest range of recreational opportunities to the Park user. A series of signs that are cohesive in design and intent will provide direction, location identification, and continuity for vehicular occupants and pedestrians.

A distinctive Park logo and a series of directional signs that are legible from a vehicle have already been developed by Recreation and Parks. Additional layers



A SIMILAR STAIRWAY WILL CONNECT THE FREEWAY TRAIL DIRECTLY TO PARK DRIVE.

of signage that name each Park facility, and provide international symbols of the recreational activities to be found at each location are an additional step of wayfinding that increases the comfort level of Park users.

As the Elysian Park trails are highly valued, efforts should focus on the development of attractive trailheads, trail walks, and trail construction. Appropriate signage throughout the network of trails will encourage much greater usage, especially when accompanied by a trail guide map of the Park (see *Taking Care of the Park* for Signage Design Standards).

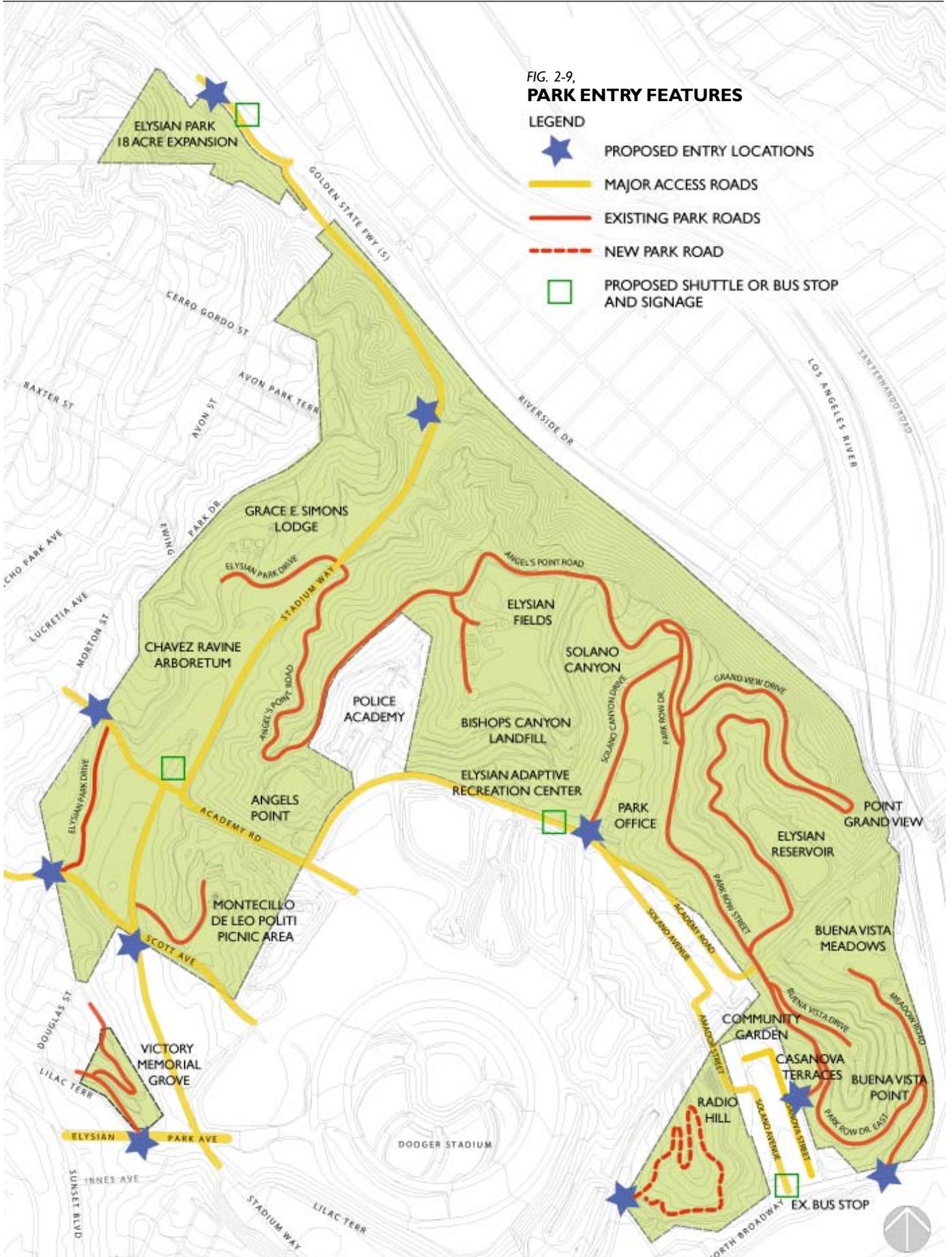
- Continue and expand the Recreation and Parks Signage Program.
- Place appropriate signage based on the developed hierarchy of wayfinding signs throughout the Park.
- Use international symbols for facilities signage under or adjacent to directional signage.
- Develop trail mileage markers. Develop trail maps with trailhead locations, recommended parking for each trail, mileage, and items of interest i.e. views, wildflowers, historic elements.
- Group signs and markers together. Consolidate sign information and remove signs that do not provide the cohesiveness of material, color, logo, and content.



FIG. 2-9, PARK ENTRY FEATURES

LEGEND

-  PROPOSED ENTRY LOCATIONS
-  MAJOR ACCESS ROADS
-  EXISTING PARK ROADS
-  NEW PARK ROAD
-  PROPOSED SHUTTLE OR BUS STOP AND SIGNAGE





MAJOR ENTRIES INTO THE PARK

The major entries into Elysian Park include a north entry from Riverside Drive and Interstate 5, south entries at Elysian Park Avenue and at Scott Avenue, and an east entry off of North Broadway. These gateways provide easy access into the Park. However two of the entries have no significant signage indicating that people have arrived at Elysian Park.

In order for entry signage to be effective, the scale of the site and the surrounding elements must be considered. Two of the Park entries are adjacent to cliffs where the existing small, horizontal signage does not read well.

Recommendations:

Vertical or appropriately dimensioned entry features are necessary for the scale of Elysian Park and for the physical constraints of the entryway locations. These features should be placed at the Park entryways to aggressively mark Park territory. Placing such signage further into Park boundaries, as is the current condition along Stadium Way, is confusing. The entry features should also be easily identified from a vehicle as this is how they will be viewed. (See *Taking Care of the Park*).

- Design vertical entry features and install at significant locations. Include park logo and incorporate burgundy color into the monument.
- Ensure pedestrian access into Elysian Park from the main entrances into the Park.

TIMELINE FOR RECOMMENDATION IMPLEMENTATION

RECOMMENDATIONS IN ORDER OF PRIORITY

ONE TO FIVE YEARS

- Establish trail system.
- Begin signage design and implementation program for wayfinding and trails.
- Modify width and repave Park roads.
- Create pod parking along roads.
- Remove one lane of Stadium Way to provide pedestrian walkway up Stadium Way.
- Implement pedestrian crossing from Elysian Park Drive to Angels Point Road.
- Construct Entry Features.

FIVE TO TEN YEARS

- Implement Leo Politi to Angels Point Pedestrian Bridge.
- Implement stairs to Buena Vista Point from the Freeway Trail.
- Implement Bus (public transportation stops) through Elysian Park.

TEN TO TWENTY YEARS

- Complete signage program.
- Complete all trail restoration, trail head development, and trail connections.
- Acquire land to connect trails and provide access into Elysian Park from surrounding parklands and trails.

DRAFT