



Traffic Guidelines Manual

ORIGINATOR State Traffic Engineer	2-6-36
CHAPTER 2	Signs
SECTION 6	Guide Signs - Freeway
SUBJECT 36	Parallel Off-Ramp Exit Direction Signing

A. Background and Purpose

The 2009 MUTCD, [Section 2E-36](#) states that post mounted Exit Direction signs *should* be mounted at the beginning of the deceleration lane. If there is less than 300 feet from the upstream end of the deceleration lane to the theoretical gore, the Exit Direction sign *should* be installed overhead over the exiting lane in the vicinity of the theoretical gore.

Occasionally long parallel (deceleration) exit ramps are constructed to provide for additional capacity for exiting traffic, thus helping to eliminate traffic slowing and queuing in the mainline travel lanes. Some of these parallel exit ramps can be up $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in length. The challenge with interchange guide signing of long parallel exit ramps is that the motorist *should* know as soon as possible that the far right lane is for the Exit Only. This will allow an exiting motorist to shift from the mainline lane (s) to the exit ramp as soon as possible. This will maximize efficiency and safety of the freeway exit by helping to avoid last minute lane changes and traffic backups.

This policy will differentiate between the different lengths of parallel exit ramps and provide guidance as to the types of guide signing that *should* be used. Sight distance will play a factor as to what types of guide signing that *should* be used as well. Overhead exit direction signs *may* be required if sight distance is compromised by geometrics or if the theoretical gore location is beyond a bridge.

B. Policy

If parallel off-ramp is less than 500' from upstream end of deceleration lane to theoretical gore (Figure 1)

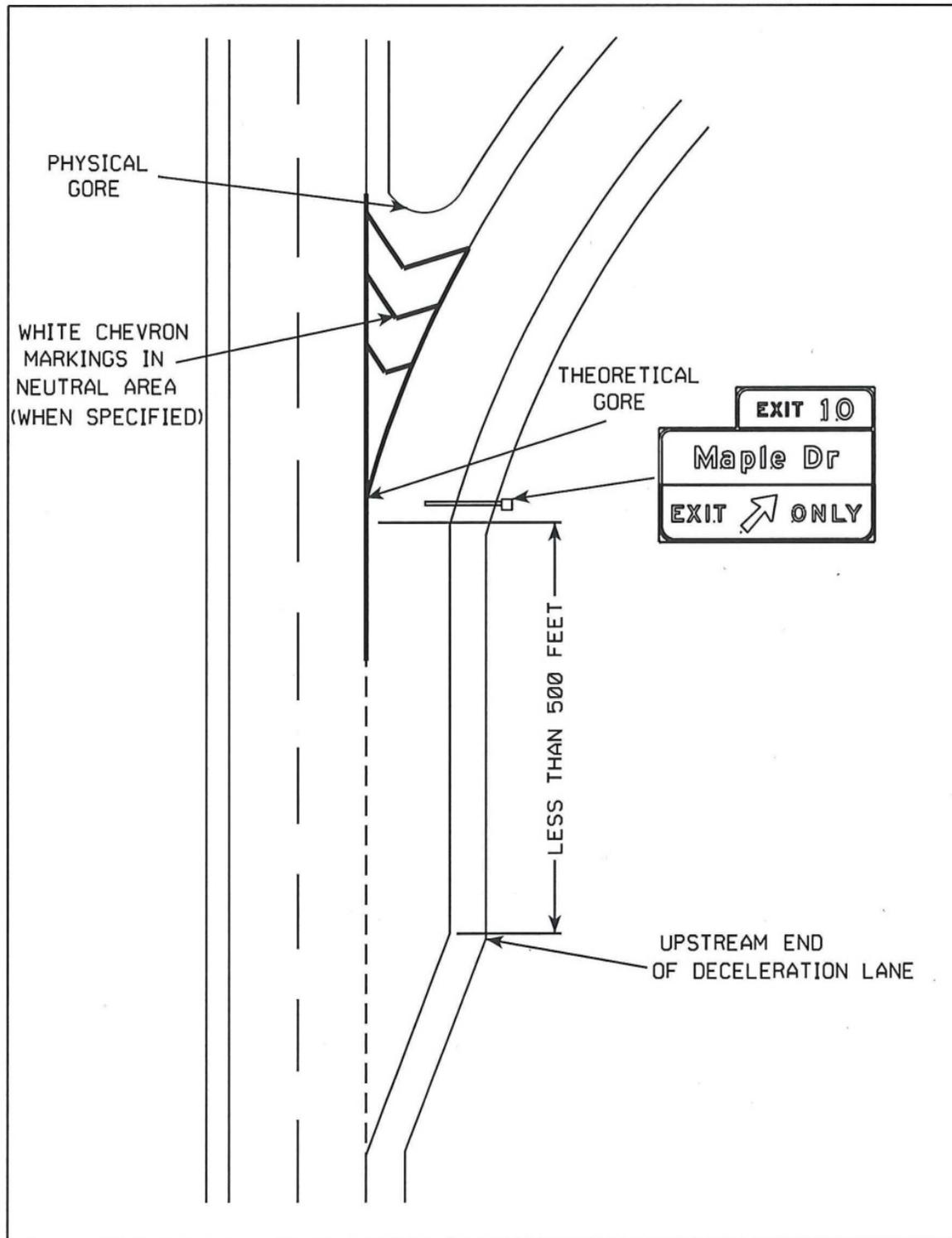
1. An overhead Exit Direction guide sign at the theoretical gore would be used.
2. Typically, no Exit Direction guide sign would be needed at the beginning of the taper for the parallel exit ramp.

500' or greater parallel exit ramp (Figure 2)

1. An overhead Exit Direction guide sign at the upstream end of the deceleration lane *should* be used.
2. Typically no Exit Direction guide sign would be needed at the theoretical gore location.
3. If the parallel exit ramp is greater than $\frac{1}{4}$ mile in length, then the ramp *should* be considered an auxiliary exit lane and have both an Exit Direction guide sign at the upstream end of the deceleration lane and Exit Direction guide sign installed at the theoretical gore location.

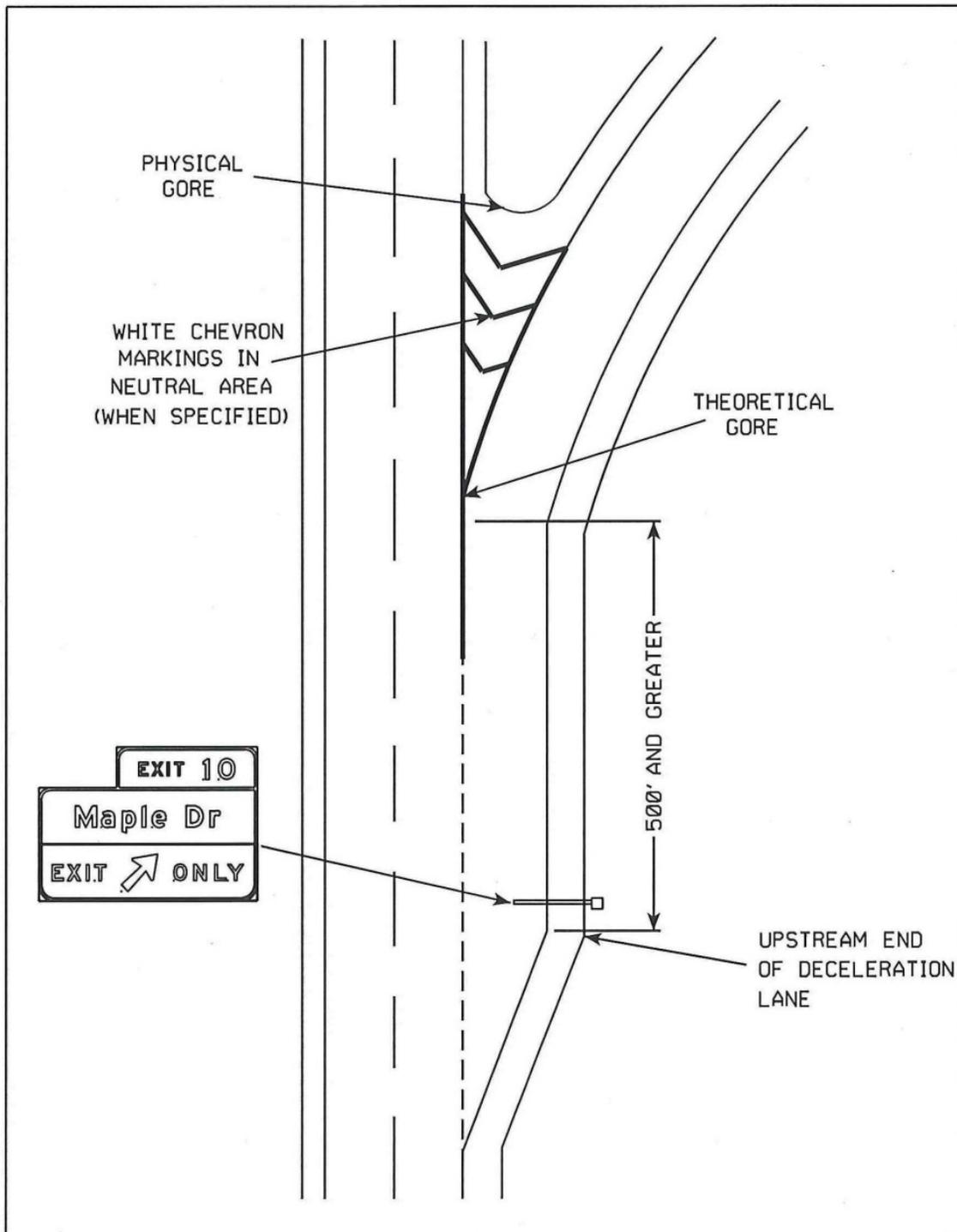
500' or greater parallel exit ramp (retrofit situation), where parallel exit ramp has been extended and existing overhead Exit Direction sign at theoretical gore is allowed to remain (Figure 3)

1. A ground mounted Exit Direction guide sign at the beginning of the taper for parallel exit ramp *should* be used.
2. The overhead Exit Direction guide sign at the theoretical gore location would not have to be moved to the upstream end of the deceleration lane.
3. If the parallel exit ramp is greater than $\frac{1}{4}$ mile in length, then the ramp *should* be considered an auxiliary exit lane and have both an Exit Direction guide sign at the upstream end of the deceleration lane and Exit Direction guide sign installed at the theoretical gore location.



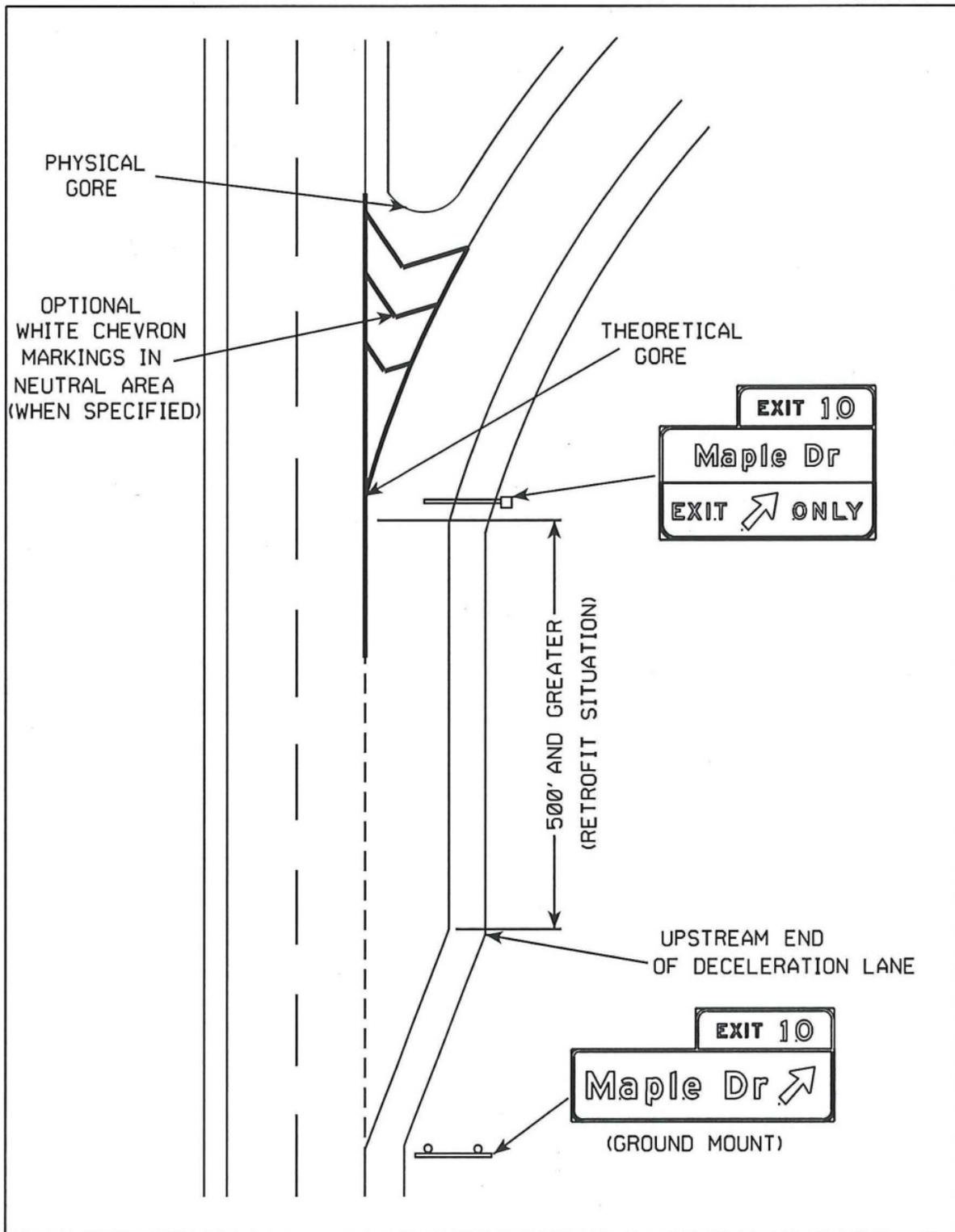
(LESS THAN 500 FEET FROM UPSTREAM END OF DECELERATION LANE TO THEORETICAL GORE)

FIGURE 1



(500' AND GREATER FROM UPSTREAM END OF DECELERATION LANE TO THEORETICAL GORE)

FIGURE 2



(500' AND GREATER FROM UPSTREAM END OF DECELERATION LANE TO THEORETICAL GORE)

(RETROFIT SITUATION)

FIGURE 3