

CHAPTER 10: GATEWAYS

Gateway features offer the opportunity for the City to announce and celebrate entry to the community and special districts. The natural and built environment of Livermore, the City's cultural, economic and development history, the surrounding wine country and the community's vision for its future can all be key design determinants for gateway features. This chapter discusses some key issues to be considered in the implementation of gateway design and location. For additional guidance, please refer to the Livermore Planning and Zoning Code and the City of Livermore Standard Details, Standard Specifications and the Development Plan Check and Procedures Manual.

CHAPTER SECTIONS

- A. Goals
- B. Gateway Types
- C. Gateway Design



A. Goals

The following goals set forth the urban design intent implicit in the design guidelines formulated for the City's entry points:

1. To enhance the sense of arrival into the City by upgrading the design standards and development character at major entry points.
2. To establish a positive first impression of the City and facilitate access into the downtown core.
3. To create identifiable entrance points into distinct neighborhoods or development districts within the City.
4. To establish a definable urban edge and transition between the urbanized community and its rural setting.

B. Gateway Types

There are three types of gateways within the City: urban gateways, special district gateways and rural gateways. These gateways provide identification for the community as a whole, both when arriving from major transportation corridors and from the surrounding rural areas. They also provide entry identification for specific neighborhoods and areas within the City.

1. City Gateways

1.1 Freeway

GUIDELINES

1.1.1 Each of the freeway interchanges in the City should provide an enhanced entry treatment south of the freeway at a logical point along the collector street leading to the downtown area.

1.1.2 A special landscape treatment encompassing both sides of the roadway should be used to create formal entry into the City.

1.1.3 The landscape treatment should use elements such as plant materials, earth berms, low walls or fences, lighting, paving, sculpture and signage to create a distinctive, high quality gateway to the City, consistent with City Standard Details, Standard Specifications and Engineering Division requirements.

1.1.4 The plantings should be dense enough and distinctive enough to clearly distinguish the entry from surrounding landscaping.

1.1.5 Native plant species and other species that have low maintenance and water consumption characteristics should be specified for these treatments to reduce long term maintenance costs.

1.1.6 Vertical elements, such as trees and color, both flower and foliage, should be used to highlight the entry treatment.



Monument uses materials that relate to Livermore's historic relationship with vineyards.

1.1.7 A sign identifying the City should be simple, made of durable high quality materials and attractively designed.

1.1.8 The design style of the sign and other architectural elements should be contemporary, but may incorporate design elements that refer to the City's history or wine industry.

1.1.9 Dramatic lighting of the entry treatment should be provided to enhance nighttime entry into the City.



Landscaped median at entry to a community.

1.2 Major and Collector Streets

GUIDELINES

1.2.1 Principal entry corridors should have special streetscape improvements to enhance the entry experience.

1.2.2 The streetscape improvements should include:

- ♦ A coordinated street tree program along both sides of the roadways and in the medians
- ♦ Landscaped medians
- ♦ A consistent and well-designed pedestrian sidewalk system including enhanced intersection treatments, such as textured paving, to highlight pedestrian crossings
- ♦ A consolidated and clearly legible system of signs
- ♦ A consistent system of street lights



Sculptural element in median at entry to a community.

2. Special District Gateways

2.1 Business

GUIDELINES

2.1.1 Monuments may be employed at the entry points to specific districts such as business parks or commercial districts.

2.1.2 The design style of the monuments should relate to the design of the buildings in the district.



Monument sign marking business entry.

2.2 Residential

GUIDELINES

2.2.1 Monuments at the entry points to neighborhoods or subdivisions should provide simple identification of the neighborhood.

2.2.2 The design and materials should relate to the residential character of the district.

2.2.3 No subdivision or development names should be included on the monument.

2.2.4 Monument should be simple and timeless in design, and should not be tied to a single subdivision.



Monument marker at entry point to residential neighborhood.

2.3 Historic Districts

GUIDELINES

2.3.1 Signs for historic districts should use materials used in the district's buildings and be consistent with the character and architectural style of the district.

2.3.2 Dramatic lighting of the signs may be used to enhance the design features of the signs and their relationship to the historic district.



Proposed monument (above) relates to historic light fixtures in community (left).

3. Rural Gateways

GUIDELINES

3.1.1 The gateways should help demarcate the transition between the developed town and the undeveloped or agrarian lands around it.

3.1.2 The gateways should be designed with imagery that echoes the rural and agricultural activities outside of town.

3.1.3 The gateways should be made of materials that are found in the agricultural and rural buildings of the local vineyards and ranches.

C. Gateway Design

Gateways should be designed consistent with the context in which they will be placed. Sometimes a gateway might be influenced by the architecture of buildings in private developments. This section discusses a number of issues related to the design of gateways.

1. Building Design

GUIDELINES

1.1.1 Buildings at gateways or prominent entries to the City should be designed with a heightened awareness of the prominent sites at which those buildings are located. Although it is a primary goal of this document to facilitate better design of all buildings in the City, extra care and attention should be given to buildings developed at key gateway locations.

1.1.2 Potential solutions for developing projects that are of an exemplary quality at community gateways include:

- ◆ Tower elements as a prominent massing feature
- ◆ Entry plazas on corner sites
- ◆ Fountains or water features
- ◆ Distinct changes in the building volume at the primary entry
- ◆ Prominent landscape features, such as tall trees
- ◆ Dramatic building lighting for nighttime effect.



Gateway buildings mark entry to a community.



Entry plaza with fountain.

2. Signs and Monuments

The following sign types may be used to identify a gateway entry.

2.1 Free-standing Monuments

GUIDELINES

2.1.1 The size of free-standing monuments should relate to their context in terms of the surrounding built and natural environments.

2.1.2 The building materials used for free-standing monuments should reflect the district in which they are located, with the use of natural materials, such as stone, emphasized at rural-urban interfaces.

2.2 Roadside Signs

GUIDELINE

2.2.1 Roadside signs can be closer to the travel lanes and therefore more visible. They are generally more appropriate in more urbanized areas, or where a number of smaller signs are used to designate the boundaries of, or entry to, a district.

2.3 Overhead Signs

GUIDELINES

2.3.1 Signs that span an entire street can be visible from great distances and are typical of many farming towns throughout the Central Valley.

2.3.2 These signs may either be suspended or attached to supporting elements and should use colors and materials consistent with the surrounding district.



Free-standing monument sign at entry to urbanized community.



Overhead sign spans street.

3. Landscaping

GUIDELINES

3.1.1 Landscape treatment should use elements such as plant materials, earth berms, low walls or fences, lighting, paving, sculpture and signage to create a distinctive, high quality gateway to the City.

3.1.2 The plantings should be dense enough and distinctive enough to clearly distinguish the entry from surrounding landscaping.

3.1.3 The design character of all furniture and accessories should be compatible with the design character and uses of the area into which the gateway leads.

3.1.4 All accessories and street furniture should be constructed of durable materials that will withstand the elements, public use and vandalism.



Proposed gateway at a bridge utilizes the parking lanes to create a landscaped entry with signs and accent lighting.



Landscaped median along entry corridor.

4. Lighting

Dramatic lighting can enhance the structural characteristics and design features of a gateway. Lighting of gateway signs should be carefully focused on the gateway feature and should not impact areas adjacent to the signs.

5. Public Art

Artwork can be commissioned by either public or private sources. Public art incorporated into gateway features offers the opportunity for artists to work in conjunction with architects and engineers on the design and construction of a gateway. Artists can be commissioned to specifically address important community-based issues that might be relevant to the type of gateway or its specific location. Particular issues that could be studied and developed by a public artist include the City of Livermore's history, which includes long standing relationships with Tri-Valley agriculture, the Labs and the wine-making industry.



Public artwork at prominent or important locations.