TO: JAMES L. APP, CITY MANAGER

FROM: RON WHISENAND, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: CITY GATEWAY DESIGN STANDARDS – PRESENTATION OF PRECEDENT STUDIES AND SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

DATE: AUGUST 15, 2006

Needs: For the City Council to receive information on: 1) the existing conditions of the City's gateways; 2) precedents for creating strong urban gateways; 3) and provide input on the summary of opportunities and constraints to development of appropriate gateways for the gateway sites.

Facts:

1. On June 20, 2006 the City Council approved a contract to hire HDR Town Planning to prepare City Gateway Design Standards.

2. Prior to development of the actual gateway standards and implementation strategy, staff and HDR Town Planning would like the Council's input on the City gateways that have been identified and assessment of existing conditions.

3. The Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan (CRASP) gateway team is concurrently conducting their peer review of the CRASP. Results from this component of the project will be presented separately.

Analysis and Conclusion: To conduct the Existing Conditions Analysis, the project team toured the City with staff and reviewed relevant City policies in the *Economic Strategy* and the *General Plan Land Use, Conservation and Open Space Elements* for guidance for this project. This included use of the *City Gateways, Visual Corridors, Natural Landmarks, and Open Space View Sheds* exhibit in the *Open Space Element*, which identifies gateways to the City and other key visual amenities.

The Existing Conditions Analysis report identifies gateways, opportunities and constraints to enhance these gateways, and describes the continuum of transitions from outside the City limits to entrances of the City. The analysis describes this transitional continuum utilizing a nomenclature known as Transect Classification. Transect classifications are a method used to describe the changes in landscapes from the natural, more rural areas to sub-urban and urban places. The Existing Conditions

Analysis evaluates challenges for the gateways to become more attractive and existing features to be maintained.

The Precedent Study is a summary of other communities that have strong urban gateways, with a focus on different gateway types, and how landscaping, land uses, signs, parking design, art, building form, and other techniques are used as important features in attractive, memorable gateways.

Information gathered in the Existing Conditions and Precedent studies are synthesized into a series of interpretive maps and a summary of key opportunities and constraints on how to develop great gateways for Paso Robles.

Fiscal Impacts: None.

Options:

a. Receive the above information and provide feedback on the Opportunities and Constraints Summary.

b. Amend, modify, or reject the above option.

Report prepared by Susan DeCarli, City Planner.

Attachments:

1 – Existing Conditions Analysis
2 – Precedent Study
3 – Summary of Opportunities and Constraints

Gateways of El Paso de Robles

Deliverable #1: Site Reconnaissance and Data Collection

Introduction

HDR Town Planning will prepare for the City of Paso Robles 'Gateway' design guidelines for the major entry routes to the city. Using a form-based code approach, these guidelines will also address land use standards and landscape treatment. The gateway design guidelines will provide a framework with general development parameters, which may include:

- Establishment of building form, roof articulation and architectural standards.
- Landscape standards that take into account the unique topographic characteristics of the site.
- Design standards that address civil engineering structures, such as grade separated interchange.

The role of the Paso Robles' Gateways is to implement the vision Paso Robles has set out for itself. Design Guidelines for the major entry routes to Paso Robles will draw upon existing city policies articulated within the General Plan, Chamber of Commerce's 2006 Economic Strategy, and the Draft Purple Belt Action Plan. All address the need to maintain and enhance Paso Robles' visual identity, preserve key natural features, and develop distinctive design standards that strengthen the public realm. Drawing upon the existing character of the City and its surroundings, the Gateway Design Guidelines will create memorable places which signify, educate, and announce the spirit of Paso Robles.

This document outlines the existing physical conditions of the 12 potential gateway locations identified by the city. The locations were analyzed for their strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities for creation of place. The use of the Transect, or geographical cross-section revealing a sequence of environments, set the basis for initial categorization of gateway locations, and provides the framework for further development of Gateway Design Guidelines.

•**gateway**• *n.* 1. An opening or a structure framing an opening, such as an arch, that may be closed by a gate. 2. Something that serves as an entrance or a means of access: a gateway to success; the gateway to the West 3. An area (as at a railroad station or an airport) for departure or arrival.

Potential Gateway Locations identified by the City

A. N. Spring Street
B. 24th St @ Lake Nacimento Drive
C. Union Road
D. Hwy 46 East
E. 16th Street / 101 Access
F. Paso Robles Street
G. S. Spring Street
H. Niblick Road
I. S. Vine St.
J. S. River Road
K. Creston Road
L. Hwy 46 West

Landmark Building and Sign as Gateway

Bridge as Gateway

Oak Tree As Gateway

Images reproduced from 2006 Paso Robles Economic Strategy (Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce). Image above provided by Moule and Polyzoides Architects and Urbanists.v

Relevant City Policies

2006 Paso Robles Economic Strategy
(Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce)

Distinctive Communities: Having a distinctive identity will help communities create a quality of life that is attractive for business retention, future residents and private investment. Community economic development efforts should help to create and preserve the community's sense of uniqueness, attractiveness, history, cultural and social diversity, and include public gathering places and a strong local sense of place.

Built, natural and social environment.

- Improve overall quality of built form (design/architecture);
- Preserve, enhance, and provide access to key natural features/places;
- Expand and maintain high quality transportation systems and facilities, public places and buildings, telecommunitcation systems, and utilities.

Regional presence and profile.

- Brand Paso Robles locally and regionally.

Place: Actions

Improve quality of place to attract investment and knowledge workers, stimulate investment by establishing distinctive, quality, stable, safe, and sustainable physical improvements and attractions that welcome industry, commerce, tourism, employment, and wealth necessary to maintain and enhance quality of life.

Develop distinctive design standards and invest in design excellence to:

- Create inspiring and memorable places;
- Emphasize the appearance and qualities of the public realm;
- Create streetscapes, pathways, and public spaces of beauty, interest, and functional benefit to pedestrians.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings
- Preserve energy and natural resources

Paso Robles General Plan (2003)

Land Use Element

Goal LU-2: Image/Identity. Maintain/enhance the City's image/identity.

Policy LU-2B: Visual Identity. Promote architectural and design excellence by imposing stringent design and construction standards for commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and multi-family projects.

Action Item 2. Adopt design standards to clearly articulate how important public views, gateways and landmarks (as shown on Figure CE-3) are to be maintained/enhance. This is to include but not be limited to:

- Enhancing views along highways, roads, streets, rail co ridors with landscaping, building setbacks, enhanced architecture and signage/monuments.
- Ensuring that residential building lots are of sufficient size to preserve the topographic and aesthetic features of the landscape.

Policy LU-2E. Purple Belt (OPen Space/Conservation Areas Around the City. Create a distinct "Purple Belt" surrounding the City by taking actions to retain the rural, open space, agricultural areas.

Conservation Element

Goal C-5: Visual Resources. Enhance/upgrade the City's appearance.

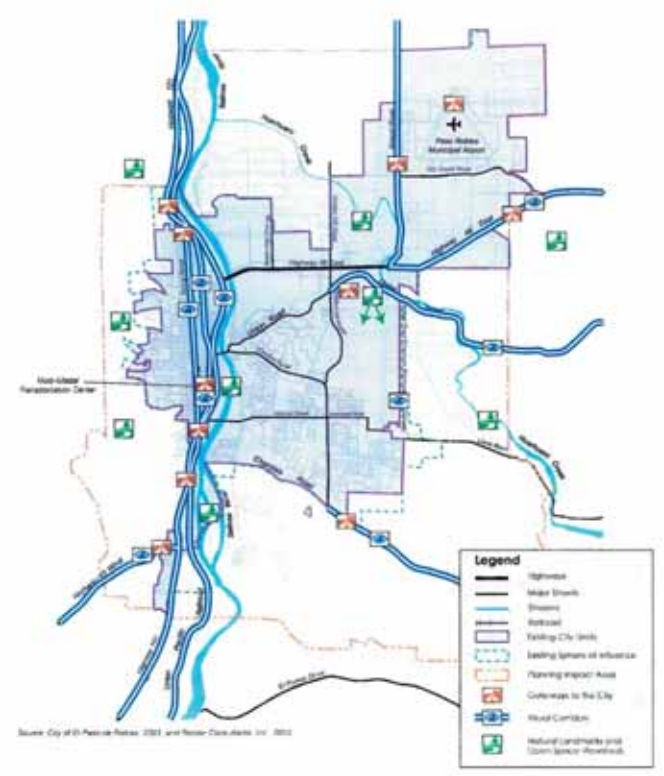
- Policy C-5A: Visual Gateways and Landmarks. Identify important visual resources: gateways, corridors, major arterials, natural/open space areas, as show on Table C-1 and Figure C-3.

Open Space Element

Policy OS-1A Open Space/Purple Belt. Develop an open space plan/program for establishing an open space/purple belt (agricultural preserve area) surrounding the City.

- Action Item 4. Review development projects to ensure they complement the natural environment and agricultural lands, as applicable, in their location and design.

City Gateways, Visual Corridors, Natural Landmarks, and Open Space View Sheds
(from General Plan 2003)



DRAFT Paso Robles Purple Belt Action Plan (2005)

"The goal was not to limit growth at the City boundaries identified in the General Plan, but rather to leave room for continued growth and expansion and retain the rural character of the surrounding areas."

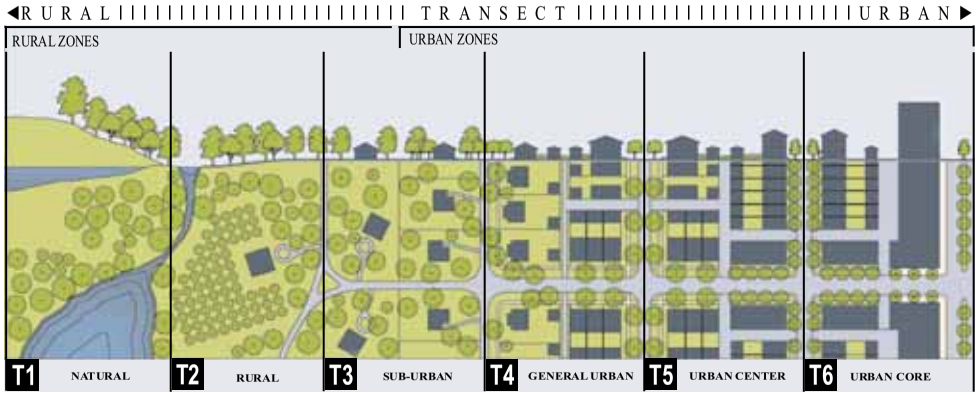
"The term 'Purple Belt" ...is viewed as a more appropriate term than the more typical 'Green Belt' given the significant presence of red grape growing in and around the city. "

The Transect

The Transect, in its origins (Von Humboldt 1790), is a geographical cross-section of a region used to reveal a sequence of environments. Originally, it was used to analyze ecologies, showing varying characteristics through different zones such as shores, wetlands, plains and uplands. For human environments, this cross-section can be used to identify a set of habitats that vary by their level and intensity of urban character, a continuum that ranges from rural to urban. In Transect planning, this range of environments is the basis for organizing the components of the built world: building, lot, land use, street, and all of the other physical elements of the human habitat.

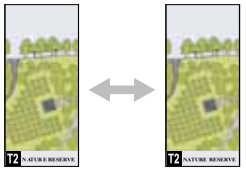
One of the key objectives of transect planning is creation of integrated environments. Successful integrated environments are based on the selection and arrangement of all the components that contribute to a particular type of environment. Each environment, or Transect zone, is composed of elements that support and intensify its locational character. Through the Transect planners are able to specify different urban contexts that have the function and intensity appropriate for their locations. For instance, a farmhouse would not contribute to the integrated quality of an urban core, whereas a high-rise apartment building would. Wide streets and open swales find a place on the Transect in more rural areas while narrow streets and curbs are appropriate for urban areas. Ideally, open country remains open and compact neighborhoods remain compact. Based on local practices, most elements can be locally calibrated to contribute to the regional and vernacular character of a given environment.

The continuum of the Transect, when subdivided, lends itself to the creation of zoning categories. Six have been identified. These Transect zones (T-zones) display more-or-less fixed identifiable characteristics, from the most rural and natural environment (T-1) to the most urban environment (T-6). The six Transect Zones are: T-1 Natural Zone, T-2 Rural Zone, T-3 Sub-Urban, T-4 General Urban, T-5 Urban Center, and T-6 Urban Core.



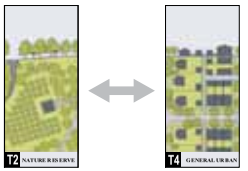
We prepared a rough regulating plan diagram showing the transect zones for Paso Robles. We used it as a basis for analyzing and classifying the gateways into 3 typologies:

Type 1: Transition within T2: Purple Belt (Rural Zone)

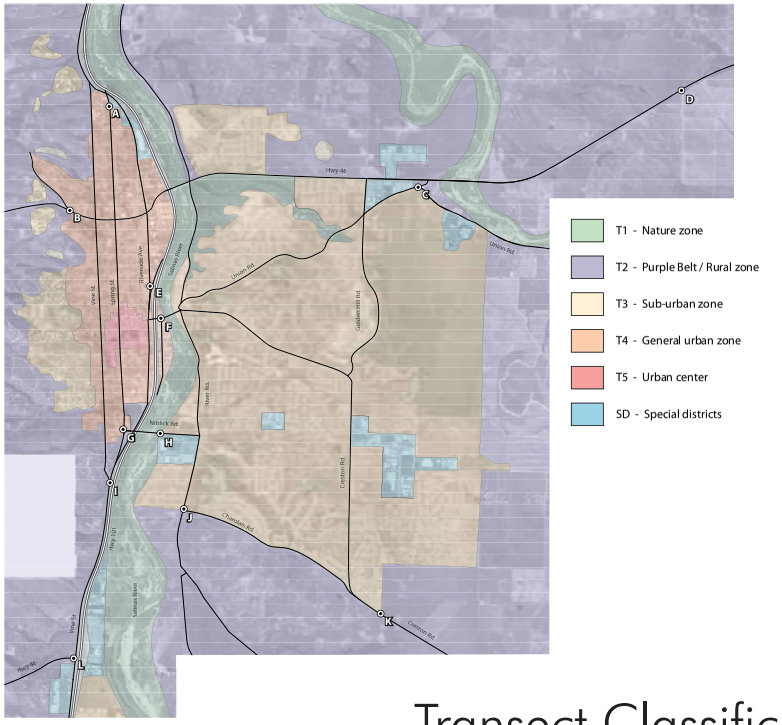


Type 2: T2 Purple Belt (Rural Zone) to T3 (Sub-Urban)

Type 3: T2 Purple Belt (Rural Zone) to T4 (General Urban)

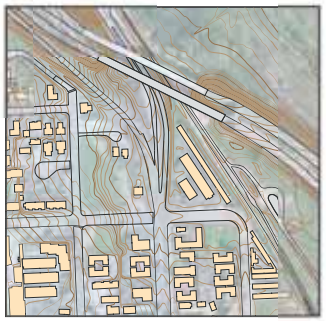


Draft Conceptual Regulating Plan



City-wide Context

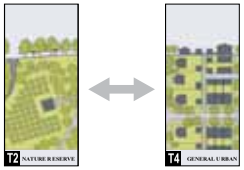
Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

A. NORTH SPRING STREET

Type 3: T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban)



This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban Zone).

- Transition between Freeway 101 and town is abrupt: there is a clear sense of arrival that needs to be refined and enhanced.
- Intuitively, gate location wants to be on Spring St., on two south corners with 36th Street, where there exists an opportunity with the median, the corner spaces (church parking) and buildings to create a spatial sequence and memorable place.
- Median leading from downtown to Gateway is planted with trees.

Fig. 1. Exit Ramp, southbound

Fig. 2. Entering city, southbound

Fig. 3. Passenger's view from exit, approaching intersection, southbound

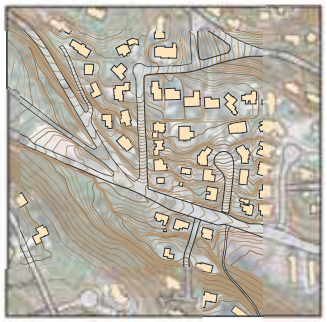
Fig. 4 At intersection, southbound

Fig. 5. Pedestrian perspective, northbound

Fig. 6. Exiting the city, northbound

City-wide Context

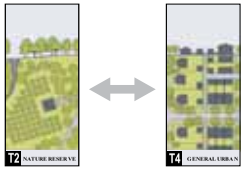
Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

B. NACIMIENTO LAKE DRIVE at 24TH

Type 3: T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban Zone)



This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban Zone).

- The transition is short, reinforced by bending in the road and topography.
- Beautiful mature trees at intersection.
- Messy drainage condition.
- Landmark use: cemetery park-like grounds and gate-like sign.
- Is there a historic photo of site to reveal original design?
- This gateway offers the opportunity to highlight the pastoral nature of the area.

Fig. 1. Entering City from Nacimiento Lake Drive

Fig. 2. Entering City from Mountain Springs Road, eastbound

Fig. 3. Pedestrian exiting City, westbound

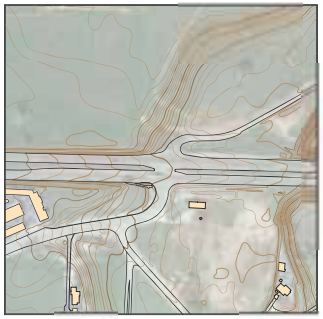
Fig. 4. Residences overlooking gateway, looking southwest

Fig. 5. Exiting west, looking toward Mountain Springs Road

Fig. 6. Cemetary entrance and drainage

City-wide Context

Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

C. UNION ROAD @ EAST HWY 46

Type 2: T2 (Purple Belt) to T3 (Sub-Urban Zone)

This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T3 (Sub-Urban Zone).

- The transition is subtle, in terms of both time and distance: views are long, transition is slow.
- Roadside industrial use (mini storage?) to the west is an eyesore.
- There is no physical sign of a change of zone (gateway).
- Bend in Union Road creates "action" that signifies change.

Fig. 1. Entering City, westbound

Fig. 2. Entering City, westbound

Fig. 3. Entering City, approaching Union intersections, looking west

Fig. 4. Entering City, looking northwest toward Highway 46

Fig. 5. Entering City, looking southwest toward Union Road

Fig. 6. Exiting City, Union Road, eastward

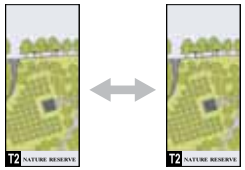
City-wide Context

Neighborhood Context

Gateway Context

D. HIGHWAY 46 EAST

Type 1: Transistion within T2: Purple Belt



This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T2 (Purple Belt).

- This is the westernmost gateway into Paso Robles.
- There are vineyards and a beautiful natural landscape along the road.
- Traces of regional native vegetation type are evident.
- The transition is extremely subtle, in terms of both time and distance: views are very long (elevated vistas), physical change is very slow.
- There is a welcome sign on the roadside. It looks lonely and devoid of scale; it could use a tree for background and shading.
- Potential for sculptural element to highlight the Purple Belt nature of the area, similar to what has been done in the wine country north of San Francisco.

Fig. 1. Elevated vista approaching city

Fig. 2. Rolling landscape outside of city limits

Fig. 3. Existing City of Paso Robles Gateway at western edge of city limits

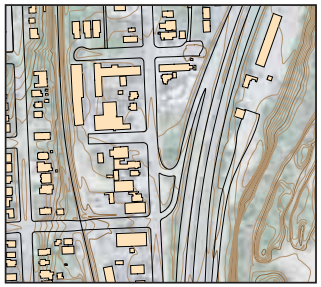
Fig. 4. Winery entrances, views of grape vines along Hwy 46 East

Fig. 5. Advertising billboards alongside road

Fig. 6. Native sage scrub

City-wide Context

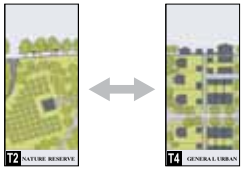
Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

E. 16TH ST / 101 HWY ACCESS

Type 3: T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban Zone)



This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban Zone).

- Transition between Freeway 101 and town is short.
- There is no space definition at all, just asphalt and dirt.
- There is a bare triangle-shaped open space as the gateway that is begging to be landscaped with majestic trees.
- Further South, the first urban landmark is a group of warehouses that don't look particularly welcoming.
- Gateway should help define character of the area and it's role within the city.
- Gateway may provide an amenity for residents/workers.
- Highway Overpass acts as a strong threshold albeit unattractive to the city. Potential for public art to enhance the experience.

Fig. 1. Entering City, from southbound Hwy 101 exit

Fig. 2. Entering City, from southbound Hwy 101 exit

Fig. 3. Looking northeast toward existing off-ramp

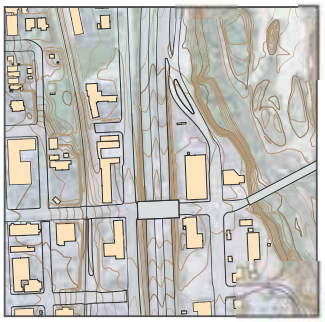
Fig. 4. Looking south from 17th Street

Fig. 5. Looking northeast toward future ramp location at 17th Street

Fig. 6. Looking west toward 17th Street from future ramp location at 17th Street

City-wide Context

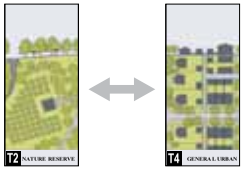
Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

F. PASO ROBLES STREET

Type 3: T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban Zone)



This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban Zone) through a light-industrial district.

- Transition between Paso Robles (exit ramp from Freeway 101) and town is relatively short.
- The district is highly unremarkable. It could be Anywhere, USA.
- The real transition point to the city is the bridge on 13th. Street that straddles Freeway 101.

Fig. 1. Entering Downtown, westbound

Fig. 2. Pedestrian view entering Downtown, westbound

Fig. 3. Exiting Downtown, eastbound

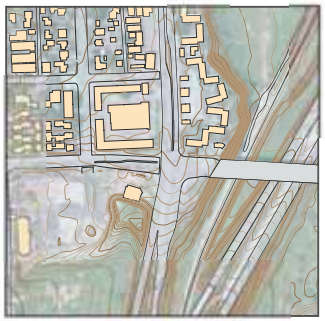
Fig. 4. Exiting Downtown, looking east, north side of street

Fig. 5. Municipal Water Works at southeast corner

Fig. 6. Land uses at southwest corner

City-wide Context

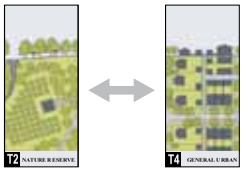
Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

G. SOUTH SPRING STREET

Type 3: T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban Zone)



This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T4 (General Urban Zone) through a huge and complex intersection.

- This is an important place where Niblick—a major east-west thoroughfare--straddles Freeway 101 to intersect with Spring Street—a major south-north urban thoroughfare, First Street, and the Northbound exit ramp from the Freeway.
- New commercial development at northeast corner, Gateway Center, contributes to a sense of encroaching sprawl, rather than a transition point from countryside to town.
- Existing marker #1: A welcome sign on northbound N. Spring Hwy 101 extended ramp (Figure 1).
- Existing marker # 2: city plaque (Figure 6) at the NE corner of the large intersection. It looks almost randomly placed as there is nothing on the NW corner to complete the sense of arrival one would expect to get.

Fig. 1. N. Spring 101 Exit Gateway, entering City

Fig. 2. Exiting City: 101 on and off ramp

Fig. 3. Approaching intersection from Hwy 101 S. Spring exit, northbound

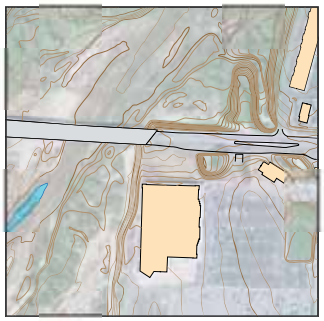
Fig. 4. New commercial "Gateway Center" on southeast corner

Fig. 5. Existing city monument at northeast corner, northbound

Fig. 6. City Plaque at NE corner monument

City-wide Context

Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

H. NIBLICK ROAD

Type 2: T2 (Purple Belt) to T3 (Sub-Urban Zone)

This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T3 (Sub-Urban Zone) through an ocean of parking surrounding a big box shopping mall.

- There exists a "real" gateway, made up of a bridge over the Salinas River and pillars.
- Niblick looks like a multi-modal thoroughfare—it has transit stops, on-street bicycle lanes, sidewalks—but doesn't feel like it because it is a very wide arterial, dangerous, and provides little amenity for the pedestrian.

Fig. 1. Approaching from eastern City, westbound

Fig. 2. On bridge over Salinas River, looking east towards Wal-Mart retail area

Fig. 3. Pedestrian experience over the Salinas River, westbound towards Downtown

Fig. 4. Future bicycle connection on southeast side of bridge?, eastbound

Fig. 5. View northwest from retail berm of Niblick Road Bridge over Salinas River

Fig. 6. Transit Stop towards bridge and Downtown, north side of Niblick Road.

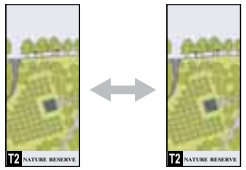
City-wide Context

Neighborhood Context

Gateway Context

I. SOUTH VINE STREET

Type 1: Transistion within T2: Purple Belt



This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T2 (Purple Belt) very slowly with Freeway 101 on east side across a chain-link fence and hills on the west side.

- Vine is one of the most emblematic and beloved street of Paso Robles, so its southern end is indeed an important gateway to the historic city.
- South Vine has an interesting row of Italian cypress trees.
- Unfortunately, the limited number of trees and their odd and irregular spacing prevents them from functioning as a gateway.

Fig. 1. South Vine Street, northbound from 46 West/ Hwy 101 interchange

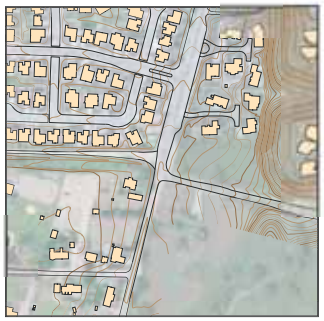
Fig. 2. Continuing north, with glimpse of italian cypress just over crest

Fig. 3. At curve in road, cypress trees come into full view

Fig. 4. Edge of road defined by cypress trees

City-wide Context

Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

J. SOUTH RIVER ROAD

Type 2: T2 (Purple Belt) to T3 (Sub-Urban Zone)

This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T3 (Sub-Urban Zone) quite abruptly.

- Charolais Road marks the Southern edge of the city limits.
- South River Road has a very attractive rustic character approaching the city, northbound, up to the intersection with Charolais.
- North of the intersection, it is abruptly widened and acquires all the characteristics of suburbia, without any manner of transition.

Fig. 1. Rustic character of South River Road approaching City, northbound

Fig. 2. South River Road intersecting with Charolais Road, northbound

Fig. 3. Edge treatment on south-east side, northbound

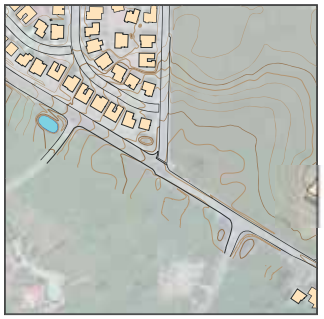
Fig. 4. Neighborhood mail center

Fig. 5. Transition from rural unpaved informal path to sidewalk and suburban development

Fig. 6. Exiting city towards intersection with Charolais Road, southbound

City-wide Context

Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

K. CRESTON ROAD

Type 2: T2 (Purple Belt) to T3 (Sub-Urban Zone)

This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T3 (Sub-Urban Zone) quite abruptly.

- Charolais Road marks the Southern edge of the city limits.
- Creston Road has beautiful rolling hills and ranch land on its southwestern side.
- The edge of suburban development creates a dramatic point of contrast with open space.
- At the intersection with Charolais, where the "Country Hills" walled (and seemingly gated) Subdivision is located, there is a suburban gateway, composed of a corner sign, stucco walls, and low landscaping. It is neither welcoming nor memorable, nor attractive.

Fig. 1. Approaching city boundary, northwest on Creston Road

Fig. 2. Major power line crossing

Fig. 3. Ranch landscape approaching residential development

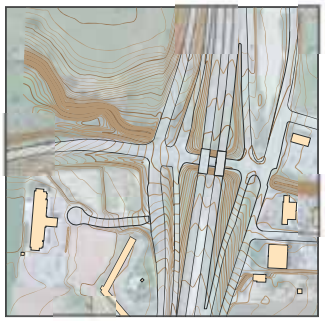
Fig. 4. Rolling hills and ranchland on southwest side of Creston Road

Fig. 5. Suburban Gateway

Fig. 6. Edge of development, looking northeast

City-wide Context

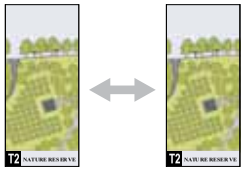
Neighborhood Context



Gateway Context

L. HIGHWAY 46 WEST

Type 1: Transistion within T2: Purple Belt



This gateway provides a transition from T2 (Purple Belt) to T2 (Purple Belt).

- This is a very complex large-scale intersection. It provides access to the city from various directions:
  - From Highway 46, coming eastbound, through beautiful rolling hills with mature oak trees,
  - From Vine Street, coming northbound, with the Freeway on the eastern side and shopping mall parking lots on the western side,
  - From Highway 101, both southbound and northbound, through short ramps.
- The motel development at the southwest corner is quite unremarkable and misses the opportunity to act as a gateway landmark.
- The key feature of this gateway is the beauty of the landscape along Highway 46.

Fig. 1. Approaching Hwy 101 , eastbound on Hwy 46 West

Fig. 2. Motel development on south side, eastbound approaching Hwy 101

Fig. 3. City Limit, eastbound approaching Hwy 101

Fig. 4. First glimpse of Hwy 101, eastbound

Fig. 5. Hwy 46 West/ 101 Interchange

Fig. 6. Hwy 101 Overpass

Gateways of El Paso de Robles

Deliverable #2: Precedent Study

WORKING DRAFT

Introduction

Gateway enhancements should reinforce the sense that one is entering or leaving the community, or moving from one part of the city to another. The introduction of positive landmarks can promote a positive image of the community, and help establish a unique sense of place.

The purpose of looking at precedents is to provide a frame of reference to help define what the gateways can be for Paso Robles. Studying precedents builds an understanding of what a 'gateway' signifies for a town – providing a reinforcement to the characteristics and uniqueness of a place. For instance, the gateway precedent may consist of a landmark highlighting the arrival into the Town Center, or provide a transition from a rural setting to the town center. A gateway can accentuate the character or entrance to a unique area, such as a wine growing region. A gateway may announce to approaching drivers that they are entering a special area where pedestrians are given equal priority with automobile traffic. The street becomes narrower, and sidewalks are provided. Specific civic gateways may be designed to modify the street sections and pavements to highlight the transition. Gateways can also beautify the entrance to the town center area through the use of signage, sculptural elements and special lighting in order to define the gateway locations at night as well as in the daytime. Sculpture or public art may be used to display a theme or something of significant cultural importance.

Many approaches and technique to help define a clear transition that have been used elsewhere as gateways. Some of these precedents are directly applicable to Paso Robles while others provide ideas and approaches that can be further developed.

To facilitate the discussion and interpretation of the various precedents we have selected, we have classified these into specific elements that are directly applicable to Paso Robles, namely:

1. Landscape: Topography

2. Landscape: Trees and Vegetation

3. Civic Infrastructure / Bridges as Public Art

4. Monuments / Manmade Landmarks

5. Walls and Arches

6. Buildings

7. Spatial Sequence

1. Landscape: Topography

Maintain integrity of organic forms that contribute to the character of the rural environment. If topography needs to be altered, appropriate treatments would include retaining walls (materials, design configuration) stepped terraces, and careful site selection to maintain the hillside character. In urbanized areas, use topography as a place-making tool.

Highway 46 West approaching Paso Robles: rolling hills, long views, organic landscape.

Pacific Grove, CA. The use of natural materials (rock) in retaining walls addressing topography.

Pacific Grove, CA. The use of natural materials (rock) in retaining walls addressing topography.

The Hollywood hills and Griffith Park, together with sign, symbolize from a distance Hollywood and Los Angeles.

In Monterey, CA's Presidio, berms and grass help deal with the topography smoothly.

Pacific Grove, CA. Seawall meterial is local, natural rock integrating the man-made structure with the organic rocky shore perfectly.

2. Landscape: Trees and Vegetation

The architectural application of trees can create a dramatic sense of progression, entrance and place. Allees, or trees arranged in regular rows on either side of a thoroughfare, create a sense of enclosure and define a passageway. They are a man-made, more urban way to use trees to mark a transitional moment and create a memorable place. Areas of dense vegetation preceding areas of intense urbanization provide a transition of contrast. Trees strategically placed in isolation punctuate a point of transition.

Approach to Main Street, St. Helena, CA

Main Street, St. Helena, CA

Union Road, Paso Robles, CA. Oak tree as Gateway

Approach to Sonoma town square, CA

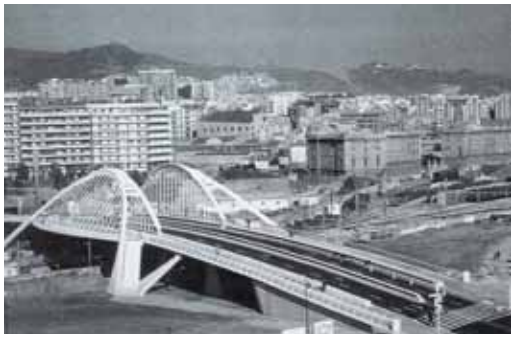
Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA. An allee of trees with a stone gateway in the median marks the beginning of Ocean Avenue.

3. Civic Infrastructure / Bridges as Public Art

Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, CA. marks the gateway into San Francisco Bay. It is the icon of the city, and a symbol of Northern California. It is an engineering wonder, as well as a piece of art (because of its color) set in a most memorable natural setting.

London Bridge, London, UK. Bridge as icon of London, a monumental building and historic symbol.A gateway between the two banks of the River Thames.

Porto Alegre, Brazil. Bridge and stairway access to bridge. This bridge crosses a major urban thoroughfare and connects two neighborhoods. A monumental stairway provides a pedestrian connection



Baca de Roda Bridge, Barcelona, Spain. An essential gateway/link between the two districts of Barcelona, straddling an important railroad. It was designed as an object d'art = a monumental sculpture. The bridge symbolizes the city and its era.

Pinole, CA. The road under the Interstate 80 bridge connects the City of Pinole and Pinole Valley. It uses art to designate a gateway, and uses a transportation motif in its imagery.

Spanish Steps in downtown Los Angeles, CA. Pedestrian Gateway to the Bunker Hill Neighborhood. The gateway effect is reinforced by the presence of a kiosk at the bottom of the stairs and the existence of a fountain that runs down the middle. The buildings flanking the stairway accentuate the transitional function of the Spanish Steps.

4. Monuments / Manmade Landmarks

Monuments are strong visual landmarks that evoke a strong sense of place. Large-scale landmarks such as the St. Louis Gateway Arch and the Eiffel Tower were designed to be seen from a distance as well as experienced up-close. Smaller gateway monuments such as the signs, banners, and structures shown on this page evoke a strong sense of place and reflect the character of the local community.

Paseo Boricua, Chicago, IL

Glasgow, VA

North Park neighborhood, San Diego, CA

Chula Vista, CA

Bakersfield, CA

Gateway Arch, St. Louis, MO

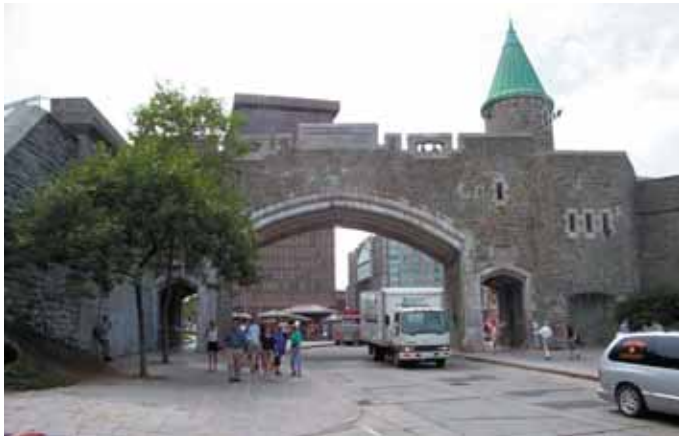
Grape-crusher sculpture at entrance to Napa Valley, CA

5. Built Form: Walls and Arches

For many different cultures, walls and arches are the historic and traditional method of creating gateways into towns. They are still used today.

Grant St., Chinatown, San Francisco, CA

Entrance to Coral Gables, FL, ca. 1920



Gate to Old Quebec City, Canada

The wall at the edge of Hampstead Garden Suburb, ca. 1909, designed inspired by the memory of English medieval towns.

6. Buildings

Buildings, because of either their configuration--scale, massing, architectural features, function or location, often serve as gateways.

Sonoma, CA. Vista terminated by landmark building.

Mendocino, CA. Watertower as landmark, civic use terminates vista.

A modern entrance to Genoa, Italy, 1930s. The first skyscraper to be built in that city marks its entrance with progressive setbacks couplesd with an arched gateway.

The Ferry Terminal Building on San Francisco's waterfront is a landmark building. It is a gateway to downtown for both the people arriving by ferry, and those riding transit, bicycling, or driving down Market Street, which it terminates.

Santa Barbara Courthouse, CA

Bauhaus Building, Dessau, Germany, ca. 1920s

Both buildings are literal gateways. The Santa Barbara Courthouse has a pedestrian gateway (arch), and connects two streets through the coutyard. The Bauhaus Building straddles a street and marks the connection between a residential neighborhood and the train station.

7. Spatial Sequence

A sequence of spaces can be used as a sophisticated, highly designed gateway to a city. As a person flows through space, he or she transitions through a sequence of experiences. Space defined by distinct spatial characteristics help signify this transition from one environment to another.

The sequence combines various spatially-defining elements, such as open spaces (a plaza or square), structural elements (such as a bridge, an arch, a monument), and buildings in various masses and configurations. Each of the examples shown here illustrates different combinations.

Street design and land-use context as gateway sequence

1. Access road to town, Sonoma

2. Purple Belt: Sonoma's edge

3. Edge with development, road narrows

4. Town marker, no sidewalks

5. Transition from rural to urban

6. Town/urban, street parking, sidewalk, retail, etc.

Transition highlighted by:

Civic infrastructure

Margaretenhoehe, Germany, main entrance, built ca. 1912

Stong building forms

Diagram illustrating an innovative approach to providing an entrance or gateway to conventional subdivisions. Studies prepared by Duany Plater-Zyberk for Hillsborough Co., FL in 1999.

Civic Spaces

Douglas Street Entrance, Coral Gables, FL, ca 1924.

Tuesday, August 08, 2006

Paso Robles Gateway Design Standards
Phase 1: Data Collection and Site Analysis

Summary of Opportunities and Constraints

Along with the presentation we have scheduled for August 15th, 2006, the present Document summarizes and concludes Phase 1 of our preparation of the Paso Robles Design Standards. The deliverables for Phase 1 comprise two documents, which are attached: #1: The Site Reconnaissance and Data Collection Report and #2: The Precedent Study.

1. SITE RECONNAISSANCE AND DATA COLLECTION

HDR Town Planning will prepare for the City of Paso Robles 'Gateway' design guidelines for the major entry routes to the city. Using a form-based code approach, these guidelines will also address land use standards and landscape treatment. The gateway design guidelines will provide a framework with general development parameters, which may include:

- Establishment of building standards regarding their configuration, function, and location.
- Landscape standards that take into account the unique topographic characteristics of the site.
- Design standards that address civil engineering structures, such as grade separated interchange.
- Urban regulations that apply to spatial sequences and their ability to signify transition.

The role of the Paso Robles' Gateways is to implement the vision Paso Robles has set out for itself. Design Guidelines for the major entry routes to Paso Robles will draw upon existing city policies articulated within the General Plan, Paso Robles Economic Strategy, and the Draft Purple Belt Action Plan. All address the need to:

- Maintain and enhance Paso Robles' visual identity,
- Preserve key natural features, and
- Develop distinctive design standards that strengthen the public realm.

Drawing upon the existing character of the City and its surroundings, the Gateway Design Guidelines will create memorable places which signify, educate, and announce the spirit of Paso Robles.

Document #1 outlines the existing physical conditions of the 12 potential gateway locations identified by the city. The locations were analyzed for their strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities for creation of place. The use of the Transect, or geographical cross-section revealing a sequence of environments, sets the basis for initial categorization of gateway locations, and provides the framework for further development of Gateway Design Guidelines.

2. PRECEDENT STUDY

Gateway enhancements should reinforce the sense that:

- One is entering or leaving the community, or
- One is moving from one part of the city to another.

The introduction of positive landmarks can promote a positive image of the community, and help establish a unique sense of place.

The purpose of looking at precedents is to provide a frame of reference to help define what the gateways can be for Paso Robles. Studying precedents builds an understanding of what a 'gateway' signifies for a town – providing reinforcement to the characteristics and uniqueness of a place. For instance, the gateway precedent may consist of a landmark highlighting the arrival into the town center, or provide a transition from a rural setting to the town center. A gateway can accentuate the character or entrance to a unique area, such as a wine growing region. A gateway may announce to approaching drivers that they are entering a special area where pedestrians are given equal priority with automobile traffic. The street becomes narrower, and sidewalks are provided. Specific civic gateways may be designed to modify the street sections and pavements to highlight the transition. Gateways can also beautify the entrance to the town center area through the use of signage, sculptural elements and special lighting in order to define the gateway locations at night as well as in the daytime. Sculpture or public art may be used to display a theme or something of significant cultural importance.

Many approaches and techniques to help define a clear transition have been used elsewhere as gateways. Some of these precedents are directly applicable to Paso Robles while others provide ideas and approaches that can be further developed.

To facilitate the discussion and interpretation of the various precedents we have selected, we have classified these into specific elements that are directly applicable to Paso Robles, namely:

- Natural landscape: hillsides and topography
- Landscape: trees and vegetation
- Civic infrastructure / bridges as public art
- Monuments and manmade landmarks
- Walls and arches
- Buildings
- Spatial sequence

3. NEXT STEPS

Phase 2 will follow immediately. It will consist in developing gateway design standards. It is scheduled to be completed by the end of September 2006.

In Phase 3, we will provide recommendations for a strategy to implement the gateway design guidelines. Phase 3 will run concurrently with phase 2.

Sincerely,

Robert Alminana
Director of Town Planning