

5

COMMUNITY CHARACTER



Establishing Community Character Through the Use of Creative Gateways

Silverton currently establishes most of its primary gateways into the city with small signs of varying design, color and size. No uniform identify exists between these gateway features. The primary gateways identified for improvement include the intersection of Stewart Road and Montgomery Road while traveling west from Kenwood. A second gateway is located at the "Y" intersection of Plainfield Road and Blue Ash Road, which would be visible while traveling south from neighboring Deer Park and the third primary gateway opportunity is located along Montgomery Road on the west side of the city at Highland Avenue within Silverton Park. This is the site of the Silverton Railroad Museum, which is essentially a gateway in itself, but it can be developed to more prominence with a sign facing the road with more landscaping.



Secondary gateways are identified at the western city corporation line along Montgomery Road and a southern gateway along a potential Woodford Road park site. All gateways should feature an original ground mounted sign with associated landscaping materials and vegetation. Consideration should be given to adding a symbolic element of unique design to these gateways by incorporating a piece of original artwork into these gateway features.



Community Gateway Initiative

Silverton should consider adopting a short-term plan for creating gateways at the identified location on the Community Gateway Map. Opportunities to create a unique sense of place begins with successful gateway enhancement at targeted entryways into the city utilizing a combination of signage, landscaping and other unique elements. The Silverton City Central Triangle Gateway Plan. Priority should be put on the City Central East and City Central North gateway locations. The order of priority follows with the Montgomery Gateway West, City Central West and Plainfield Road South gateway locations.



What is City Branding?

City branding is a process or means to distinguish a city on any level from local, regional and a national scale by highlighting what is continuously authentic about a city. It is a statement to the world about the essence, character and identity of a city.

Why Brand Cities?

For any product to succeed, it is crucial to brand in order to clearly define for the consumer, why he/she should spend money and time on that specific product. Branding the City of Silverton should therefore be viewed as branding a product geared toward a specific target market.

In order to better perceptions about a city and create stronger investor and citizen confidence in Silverton, a successful brand will answer:

- Who are we?
- What do we have to offer?
- What are our unique characteristics?
- What are our core community values?

Branding of cities therefore has the power to change perceptions by highlighting the positive and completely unique features of a city in order to attract new residents, visitors and developers seeking to invest in the city. City branding however is not about modeling one city after another great city brand, or an excuse to brag about a city's restaurants, schools and other notable features – all of which other cities may also have – it is about tapping into the authenticity of a city and bringing that distinctive essence to life for a regional audience to understand.

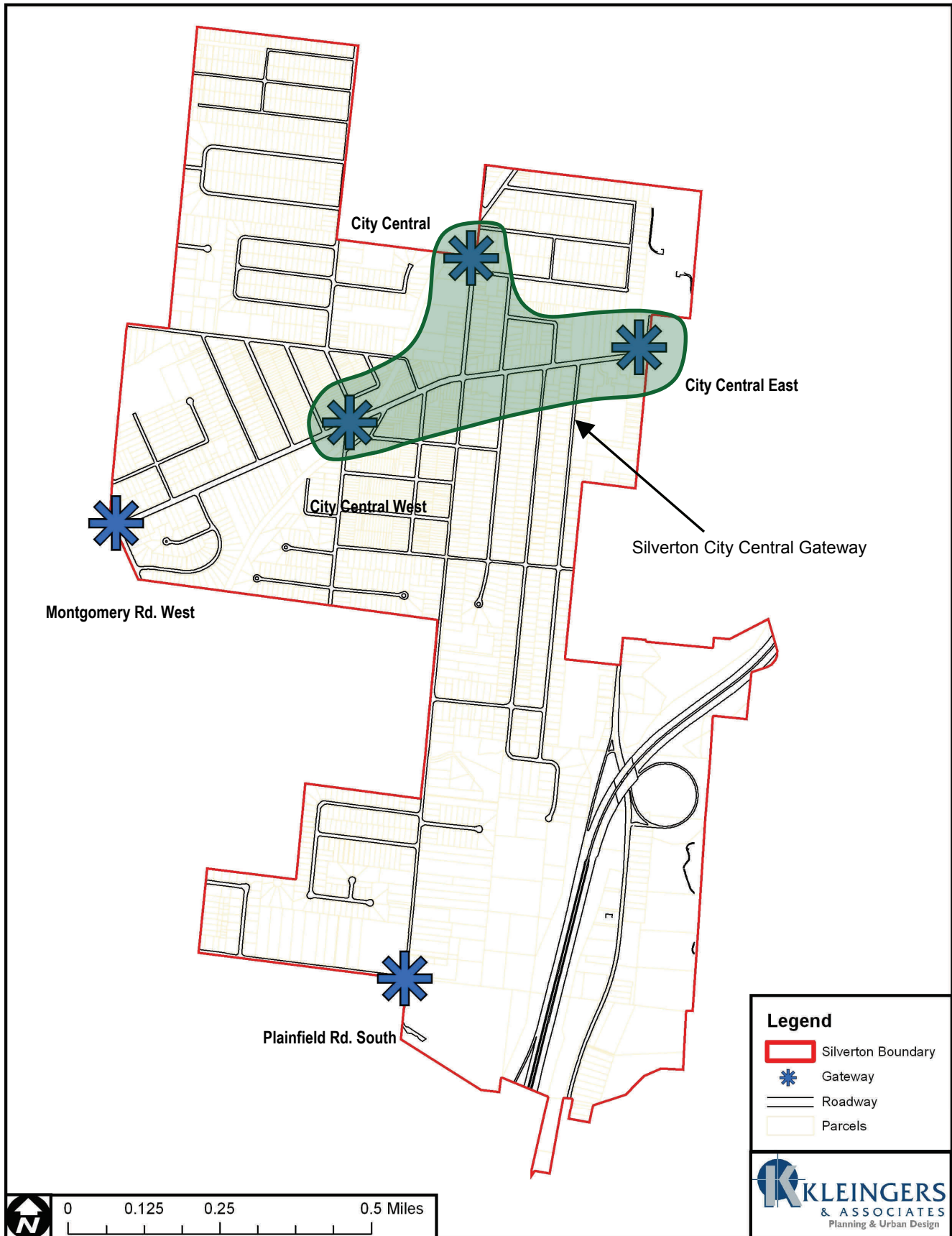
Creating a Brand for the City of Silverton

The City commissioned for the design of a new city logo to foster a proactive brand for its image. Adopted in 2007, the city's new logo (*right*) builds on some of Silverton's key elements including the silver linden leaf symbolizing the lush vegetation enjoyed throughout the city. The logo's slogan, "a front porch community" is indicative of the small town character for which the city is well known.



Silverton's City Logo Adopted in 2007

Community Gateway Map



Community Character Policy Recommendations

CC 1.0 Create City Central North Gateway

Location: East side of Plainfield Road due south of the Silverton - Deer Park corporation line for vehicles traveling southbound along Plainfield Road.

Gateway Feature Proposed: Groundmounted sign featuring masonry exterior materials consistent with the City Central design guidelines and associated landscaping.

CC 1.1 Create City Central East Gateway

Location: North or south side of Montgomery Road at the Montgomery Road and Stewart Road intersection visible to vehicles traveling westbound along Montgomery Road

Gateway Feature Proposed: Groundmounted sign featuring masonry exterior materials consistent with the City Central design guidelines, associated landscaping and original artwork/sculpture.

CC 1.2 Create City Central West Gateway

Location: Silverton Park property visible to vehicles traveling eastbound along Montgomery Road.

Gateway Feature Proposed: Groundmounted sign featuring masonry exterior materials consistent with the City Central design guidelines, associated landscaping and original artwork/sculpture.

CC 1.3 Create Montgomery Road West Gateway

Location: South of Montgomery Road at the city corporation line visible to vehicles traveling eastbound along Montgomery Road.

Gateway Feature Proposed: Groundmounted sign featuring masonry exterior materials consistent with the City Central design guidelines and associated landscaping.

CC 1.4 Create Plainfield Road South Gateway

Location: Southwest quadrant of identified Woodford Road park property visible to vehicles traveling eastbound along Woodford Road.

Gateway Feature Proposed: Groundmounted sign featuring masonry exterior materials consistent with the City Central design guidelines and associated landscaping.

CC 1.5 City Banner Program

Implement a street banner program where local corridor business owners can sponsor a banner to defray banner costs and increase business advertising opportunities. Revenue permitting, the banner program should include a minimum of quarterly banner replacements reflecting the changing seasons. Additional banners are suggested for large scale annual events.

CC 1.6 Property Maintenance Code Enforcement

Continue the strict enforcement of the property maintenance code on subject violating properties. Conduct semi-annual city-wide inspections to spot reoccurring violating properties and to identify new nuisance related property issues that may need included into the property maintenance code for future enforcement.

Community Character Policy Recommendations

CC 1.7 Establish a Public Art Program

Consideration should be given to the exploration of instituting a public art program in Silverton. "Public Art" generally means any visual work of art displayed for a minimum of 3 - 4 weeks or more in an open area owned by a municipality, on the exterior of any municipal-owned facility, or inside any municipal-owned facility in areas. Goals of a public art program may include advancing the public understanding of visual art and enhance the aesthetic quality of daily life in Silverton in addition to helping create a unique sense of place.

One public art program may include an on-going "Art on the Corner" concept where unique outdoor sculpture projects are presented at multiple locations throughout the Silverton City Central district. The program would be designed to recognize the arts, develop community pride and ultimately draw people and revenue to the Silverton City Central district.

CC 1.8 Recognizing Silverton's Rich Railroad History

Building upon Silverton's long history with the railroad, opportunities exist to create a unique element within Silverton's overall community character. Utilizing the existing Railroad Museum located in Silverton Park, this visible public facility can be transformed into a recognizable branding element to further enhance and cultivate the perception of the city.

CC 1.9 Cooperative Gateway Feature Between Silverton and Deer Park

The City should consider the pros and cons of entering into a joint arrangement with the City of Deer Park to construct a gateway feature along Plainfield Road that would allow for identification for both communities. Both communities would likely realize a cost savings by pursuing such a joint venture. However, Silverton should only consider such a scenario so long as the design, colors and scale of the gateway feature is complimentary to the design guidelines established for the Silverton City Central.

CC 1.10 Increase Communication of City Events to Citizens and Business Owners

Consideration should be given to seeking out proactive and cost effective methods to promote city-wide events. Events and newsworthy items relating to both city government and local business and other civic groups should be routinely passed on to the citizens and business owners of Silverton. Promoting the positive events taking place in Silverton serves a valuable purpose to fostering community support and building a positive internal perception of its citizens. Methods of communication to explore include: Bi-Monthly city newsletters, regular website updates pertaining to timely newsworthy events, creating a community blog spot as part of the municipal website as a means to exchange information and targeted bulk mailing through commercial advertising mediums.

CC 1.11 Continue City Branding Efforts

Building upon the adoption of Silverton's new brand logo in 2007, the City should continue to proactively develop Silverton's unique brand to reinforce the concept that Silverton is a desired location for new residents, visitors and new investment by the development community. This may be accomplished by comprehensively tying together several elements mentioned within this plan including design and color scheme used in the Silverton City Central district and all city gateway features, the city banner program and other highly visible public improvements. Other efforts aimed at increasing the brand awareness of Silverton may include regional marketing to targeted audiences, strategically selecting the type of large scale annual events held within Silverton to coincide with the brand message, and to aggressively promote the new museum school facility to be built in Silverton by the Cincinnati Public Scholl District.