

# 4 Community Identity Element



CITY OF  
**LIVERMORE**  
CALIFORNIA

Draft General Plan 2045



## 4. COMMUNITY IDENTITY ELEMENT

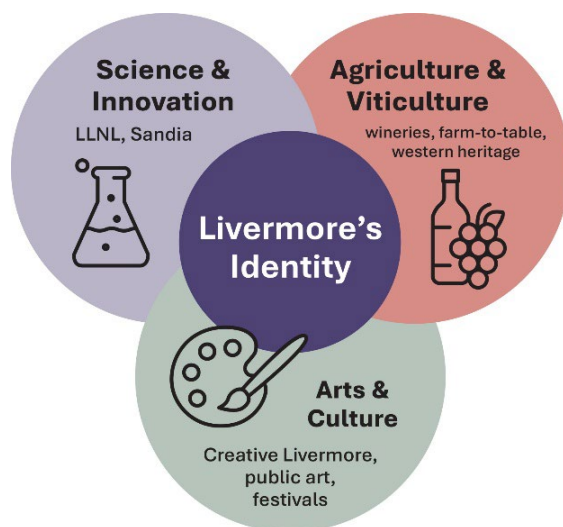
*Civic life, governance, art, culture, and the natural and built environments help create a strong sense of community for Livermore. The Community Identity Element reflects the importance of celebrating Livermore’s community, enhancing its attractive qualities, and protecting its unique history and physical setting.*

Community identity is defined in this chapter as the unique, shared sense of the Livermore community as created by its people, environment, and history. Community identity can be understood as a combination of both the social aspect of the city, including its civic life, governance, art, and culture, and its physical natural and built environment that contribute to its scenic and aesthetic qualities.

Although State law does not require a Community Identity Element, it does mandate the inclusion of certain topics, such as cultural, paleontological, and scenic resources within the Open Space Element. The City of Livermore has chosen to address these topics here to reflect its strong commitment to preserving local history, cultural heritage, and the city’s distinctive physical setting.

### Livermore’s Identity

Livermore’s community identity is shaped by a rich interplay of science and innovation, long-established agricultural heritage, and artistic and cultural expression. As home to world-renowned research institutions like Lawrence Livermore and Sandia National Laboratories, the city has long been a hub of scientific discovery and technological advancement. This spirit of innovation is grounded in Livermore’s deep agricultural roots, where generations of farming and viticulture have cultivated not only the land but a strong sense of stewardship and resilience. Complementing these foundations is a vibrant arts and culture scene—reflected in public art, local theaters, community festivals,



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and historic preservation—that celebrates creativity and community pride. Together, these elements form a dynamic and evolving identity that honors Livermore’s past while embracing its future.

The Community Identity Element, while not mandated by State law, provides a framework for the planning, development, design, and social fabric of the community. This element addresses the following topics:

### **Civic Life and Governance**

Supporting inclusive, transparent, and responsive governance that fosters civic engagement and community well-being.

### **Arts and Culture**

Supporting vibrant and diverse artistic and cultural expression that enriches community identity and quality of life.

### **Cultural and Paleontological Resources**

Supporting the protection and stewardship of cultural and paleontological resources to preserve heritage and scientific value.

### **Historic Resources**

Supporting the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic resources to maintain community character and historical continuity.

### **Natural Setting**

Supporting the conservation and enhancement of natural landscapes to sustain ecological health and community enjoyment.

### **Scenic Resources**

Supporting the protection of scenic vistas and visual character that contribute to a distinctive and attractive environment.

### **Lighting and Glare**

Supporting responsible lighting practices that enhance safety and visibility while minimizing glare and light pollution.

### **Gateways**

Supporting the design and enhancement of community gateways to create welcoming and memorable entrances.

### **Urban Design**

Supporting thoughtful urban design that promotes livability, connectivity, and a strong sense of place

## Relevance to General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles

The Community Identity Element implements the 2045 General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles by establishing policies that celebrate Livermore’s uniqueness, strengthen community connections, and preserve the features of the natural and built environment that shape the city’s identity. This element expresses the following Guiding Principles:



### **Vibrancy**

- Building social resilience through active civic community engagement.
- Supporting community-driven events, festivals, and celebrations that enhance neighborhood identity and community enjoyment.
- Creating heritage tourism opportunities that promote local businesses and cultural attractions.



### **Diversity**

- Promoting inclusive civic participation through diverse outreach channels.
- Emphasizing Livermore as a safe and welcoming community for people of all backgrounds.
- Creating accessible community gathering spaces where people from different backgrounds can build social connections.



### **Sustainability**

- Preserving Livermore’s natural setting through protection of hills, ridgelines, and natural amenities that define the community’s scenic character.
- Minimizing light pollution and obtrusive glare.
- Requiring sustainable design features in new development.



### **Continuity**

- Celebrating science and innovation as integral parts of Livermore’s history and identity through public space design, museums, and educational programs.
- Preserving historical resources that commemorate the past and protect the community’s architectural character.



### **Arts**

- Expressing Livermore’s identity through arts and culture by expanding public art opportunities.
- Integrating arts and culture through murals, public spaces, and artistic elements in City projects.
- Dedicating City resources to maintain comprehensive arts programming that celebrates local creativity and innovation.

## CIVIC LIFE AND GOVERNANCE



*Fairs and festivals support civic life by encouraging social interaction, community engagement, and a shared sense of identity in Livermore.*

### What is Social Resilience?

“Social resilience” is the ability of people to rely on social connections, community, and relationships to help respond to crises, withstand stresses, and adapt to changes. These include friendships and familial relationships at the personal level and can be as large as community and neighborhood groups where people regularly connect and maintain social bonds in communal settings. Social resilience is evidence of an active, connected community and is important for mental and emotional health as a means for people to directly support each other in times of

Livermore strives to be a safe and welcoming community for all people. The design of public spaces and the conduct of events and activities should reflect this core principle. Spaces where people gather to interact, socialize, and participate in shared experiences, such as plazas, parks, community centers, theaters, museums, libraries, markets, prominent streets, and public buildings like libraries and City Hall, are essential to fostering a vibrant civic life and strong community. These may include both public spaces and privately owned areas that are accessible to the public, and they should be intentionally designed to support inclusive events and activities.

Community events and activities bring people together. Events not only allow people to share experiences, culture, and traditions together, but also foster collaboration and relationships between the City and community organizations.

Civic life includes community member participation in governing and decision-making. Community participation takes many forms—from engaging in dialogue at City Hall meetings, public forums, and workshops, to volunteering in activities that enhance and care for public spaces. Together, these efforts strengthen public life and improve the overall quality of life in the community. Understanding who lives in Livermore through accurate and current data on demographic trends is essential for shaping policy, programs, and activities that are inclusive and responsive to everyone’s needs.

# Goal CI-1

**Strengthen social resilience by building and nurturing an active civic community.**



## Policies

- Policy CI-1.1 Safe and Welcoming Community**  
 Emphasize that Livermore is a safe and welcoming community. Endeavor to reflect this in City policies, programs, activities, and developments.
- Policy CI-1.2 Cultural and Community Events**  
 Provide resources and support to facilitate cultural and community-driven events, such as festivals, farmers’ markets, cultural celebrations, and community service days, that foster social cohesion, strengthen neighborhood identity, and enhance community well-being.
- Policy CI-1.3 Community-Based Organization Partnerships**  
 Partner with community-based organizations that promote community resilience and social connections through programs, services, and events. Support events and activities of community-based organizations.
- Policy CI-1.4 Agency Partnerships**  
 Collaborate with partner agencies, including the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District, Livermore Area Recreation and Park District, transit agencies, and utility service providers to support social resilience through programs, services, and dedication of resources.
- Policy CI-1.5 Citywide Civic Spaces**  
 Explore opportunities to develop, expand, and activate civic and social gathering spaces throughout the community. Require, to the extent feasible, that existing and new spaces be accessible to people of different backgrounds and abilities where people can build social connections with one another.



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### Policy CI-1.6 Site-Specific Social Spaces

Include communal and accessible spaces for the enjoyment of residents, patrons, and the public in new development.



Livermore Valley Arts' annual Diwali celebration at the Bankhead Theater brings the community together in celebration of South Asian music, dance, and cultural traditions.

## Goal CI-2


Promote strong civic and community participation in Livermore governance.




**Policies**

- Policy CI-2.1 Volunteerism**


Continue to empower residents of all ages and abilities to volunteer toward improving conditions in Livermore through citywide initiatives and maintain a culture within City government that supports and celebrates volunteerism.


- Policy CI-2.2 Outreach Channels**


Use a diverse range of multicultural and accessible outreach channels to promote civic engagement opportunities and community events, with a focus on connecting with underserved and hard-to-reach groups.


- Policy CI-2.3 Community-Based Organization Outreach Partnerships**


Partner with community-based organizations to conduct comprehensive community outreach and engagement at key stages of planning, policy, and project development.


- Policy CI-2.4 Neighborhood-Based Engagement**


Prioritize holding community engagement events in locations that are convenient and accessible to residents and workers, such as neighborhood centers, schools, transit hubs, and employment areas, community festivals and markets, to increase participation and ensure all voices are heard.


- Policy CI-2.5 Community Feedback and Continuous Improvement**


Actively seek community feedback to improve outreach, engagement, and service delivery. Conduct regular surveys to assess satisfaction, inform major policy decisions, and evaluate City programs. Use input to guide continuous improvement and align City efforts with community priorities.


- Policy CI-2.6 Periodic Demographics Review**


Periodically review Livermore’s demographic trends to inform and adjust the City’s outreach approach and strategies, such as translating materials or using culturally relevant media that reflects the diversity of the community.


- Policy CI-2.7 Process Modifications**

Periodically review public meeting processes like meeting times, communication methods, and commission and board makeup and structure to ensure they are accessible to a wide range of residents and are representative of the community.


- Policy CI-2.8 Civic and Public Facilities Use**

Leverage and promote the use of Livermore’s existing civic spaces and public facilities for community engagement and outreach and explore opportunities for the creation of new public facilities.



# ARTS AND CULTURE



*Public art in Livermore's parks and plazas enhances the public realm by adding vibrancy and bolstering the community's identity.*

### ***Creative Livermore***

In 2021, the City of Livermore commissioned a consulting team to evaluate its local arts and cultural “ecosystem” to identify strengths and challenges. It found that Livermore is a local arts center with a very active and creative community but with limited opportunities for youth and families to participate in art, as well as a need for more support for creative producers. Based on these findings, the City and its team developed the “Creative Livermore” framework to support the future of arts and culture in Livermore.

The Livermore community expresses its identity and values through public art, cultural exhibits and performances, and live events. Livermore’s story of innovation in science and technology, as well as its agricultural roots, can be celebrated through the arts.

Supporting the arts in Livermore, as well as cultural organizations and associations, encourages artists to explore, create, and share their work. The City’s *Creative Livermore* framework is a key City initiative that identifies priorities and challenges and sets a long-term framework for art and culture. The City’s Public Arts Program helps implement that framework by awarding grants to support art projects across the city.

The City also directly incorporates art into the design of its public buildings, spaces, and facilities and sets guidelines for how public art required as part of private developments can reflect Livermore’s culture and history.

Food as a medium for shared sustenance and creative expression connects Livermore’s agricultural roots with its present-day flavor of making, building, and innovating. Bakers, growers, brewers, roasters, wine makers, and many service workers are essential to Livermore’s culinary culture. Designing spaces and supporting events that celebrate local food and drink in Livermore are strong opportunities for arts and culture.

## Goal CI-3

Celebrate Livermore's history and identity through arts and culture.



### Policies

**Policy CI-3.1 Arts and Culture Framework**

Celebrate the community’s creativity, historic legacy, and leadership in science and innovation by integrating these themes into public art, cultural programming, and community engagement.

**Policy CI-3.2 Creative Livermore**

Implement the City of Livermore’s *Creative Livermore* framework to expand public art opportunities and programs.

**Policy CI-3.3 Art Programs**

Allow and encourage programs that promote Livermore’s artists, creative traditions, and historic resources, including events and interpretive materials.

**Policy CI-3.4 Art Community**

Allow and encourage artists, community groups, and volunteer organizations to implement temporary and permanent public art programs.

**Policy CI-3.5 Art and Parks**

Work with the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District to expand public arts programming.

**Policy CI-3.6 Art Partnerships**

Build and nurture relationships with arts and culture organizations and creative enterprises, coordinating on matters such as funding, events, and promotion of the arts.

**Policy CI-3.7 Art and Outreach**

Employ art as a means of public outreach and engagement.

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**Policy CI-3.8 Livermore Heritage in Capital Projects**

Incorporate locally relevant themes, including science, innovation, history, and agriculture into public art or artistic elements in the design of City capital projects, private development projects, and existing public spaces.

**Policy CI-3.9 Art Implementation**

Implement arts and culture projects through agreements or partnerships with experienced artists, arts professionals, or arts organizations in the city.

**Policy CI-3.10 Science Education**

Collaborate with Livermore’s science exhibition partners and promote them as destinations where people can learn about the innovative history of Livermore.

**Policy CI-3.11 Promotion in Public Events**

Support community events that highlight science and innovation and use these events to promote Livermore as a leader in science and innovation.



**Policy CI-3.12 Partnerships**

Establish, support, and foster science and innovation partnerships, including with Las Positas College, local schools, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratories, and private businesses.

# Goal CI-4

Strengthen agriculture and food as important and defining aspects of Livermore’s culture and identity.



**Policies**

**Policy CI-4.1 Farm-to-Table**

Pursue opportunities to attract and develop farm-to-table supermarkets, local food hubs, artisanal markets, and other complementary uses in Livermore.



**Policy CI-4.2 Sustainable Agriculture and Food System**

Establish biodiversity and environmental stewardship as key goals for a sustainable agriculture and food system and pursue opportunities to incorporate these goals in both public and private agricultural and food systems.

**Policy CI-4.3 Food Tourism**

Work with restaurants, wineries, food organizations, and local farmers to develop and expand opportunities for food tourism.

**Policy CI-4.4 Dining and Restaurant Districts**

Pursue opportunities to require the development of dining and restaurant districts to reflect the diversity of Livermore's food economy, including wineries, restaurants, breweries, craft industries, and agriculture.

## CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources are sites and remains associated with humans. Paleontological resources are the preserved remains of prehistoric plants and animals. Livermore includes both. Pleistocene vertebrate fossils have been located within the Planning Area; a fossil mammoth was found during excavations within the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in 1997 and 1998. Fossils and other paleontological resources are important to scientific study.

Cultural resources in Livermore include both prehistoric and historic resources. The Livermore Valley has been inhabited by humans for 6,000 to 12,000 years, and these people left evidence of their presence. The specific locations of known prehistoric sites are not shared publicly, to protect these delicate and irreplaceable resources, but prehistoric resource sites are generally located near water sources such as creeks or springs. There is a high probability of additional undiscovered prehistoric cultural resources when ground is disturbed around these features.

Native Americans continue to live in the East Bay and in Livermore, and State law protects their access to tribal cultural resources. Tribal cultural resources can include historic or prehistoric sites, as well as plants, landmarks, locations of religious worship, or views of or access to sacred sites. Understanding, identifying, and protecting tribal cultural resources must be done in consultation with Native American tribes, as required under California law.

## Goal CI-5

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**Protect cultural resources (archaeological and/or Tribal) and paleontological resources that enrich our understanding of early Livermore and the surrounding region.**



### Policies

**Policy CI-5.1 Resource Sensitivity and Evaluation**

Require appropriate investigations, such as site surveys, subsurface testing, and monitoring by qualified professionals as part of the environmental review process when development is proposed in identified areas of cultural, tribal cultural, and paleontological sensitivity.

**Policy CI-5.2 Discovery and Mitigation**

If cultural, tribal cultural, including human remains, or paleontological resources are discovered during construction, require immediate suspension of work in the area and evaluation by a qualified professional. If the resource is significant, prioritize preservation in place; if not feasible, implement appropriate mitigation such as data recovery.

**Policy CI-5.3 Preservation and Education**

Preserve and curate significant archaeological resources for research and educational purposes. Where feasible, make these resources accessible to the public through open space, recreation, or educational programs.

**Policy CI-5.4 Tribal Cultural Resources and Consultation**

Respect and protect tribal cultural resources, including sacred sites, landscapes, and culturally significant objects. Maintain collaborative relationships with local Native American tribes and consult with tribal representatives as required by State law, particularly near culturally sensitive areas such as Brushy Peak.

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

Livermore’s historic resources include historic structures, sites, and areas that played important roles in local history. Other buildings, while not technically of historic significance, are valuable because of design attributes that provide insight into architectural styles and values of the past. The City recognizes these historic resources as worthy of preservation both for their aesthetic and cultural importance and because they are an integral part of Livermore’s character and identity.

Most of Livermore’s historic resources are concentrated Downtown, in an area roughly bounded by Railroad Avenue to the north, Maple Avenue to the east, College Avenue to the south, and Holmes Street to the west. In addition, historic resources associated with viticulture, dry farming, or stock raising are present in the Planning Area.

### Goal CI-6

Preserve the City’s historical resources to commemorate the past, protect the community’s architectural character, and foster social and economic vitality.



#### Policies

##### **Policy CI-6.1 Historical Resources Conservation and Re-Use**

Conserve historic resources and buildings to the extent feasible, including City-owned and community-significant resources. Preserve the original use of historical resources when possible or adaptively re-use historical resources when the preservation of the original use is not feasible.

##### **Policy CI-6.2 Historical Preservation Integration into City Planning**

Integrate historical preservation goals, policies, and actions into the City’s comprehensive planning efforts throughout various City departments and functions.

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- Policy CI-6.3 Historic Resources Inventory and Context Statement**  
Maintain and periodically update the Historic Resources Inventory and Historic Context Statement, as needed, to reflect changes due to the passage of time, loss of existing historical resources, and the availability of new or reinterpreted information.
- Policy CI-6.4 Historic Preservation Ordinance**  
Designate and protect historic resources and potential historic resources in accordance with the Historic Preservation Ordinance.
- Policy CI-6.5 Historical Preservation through Specific Plans, Area Plans, and Guidelines**  
Develop historical preservation goals, policies, and actions into new Specific and Area Plans and Specific and Area Plan updates where feasible and appropriate. Establish design guidelines for historical resources and historic districts based on established federal and State standards and guidelines.
- Policy CI-6.6 State Historical Building Code**  
Use the State Historical Building Code (Chapter 8 of the California Uniform Building Code) to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and other municipal building code requirements to preserve the architectural integrity of historic buildings and structures.
- Policy CI-6.7 Historical Preservation Professionals**  
Require that historical resource evaluations and impact analysis are performed by a qualified professional meeting the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications for any projects that could affect a known or potential historical resource as a part of the environmental assessment and/or permitting process.
- Policy CI-6.8 City Staff Training**  
Train City staff and appointed committees and commissioners in the City’s historical preservation policies, practices, and procedures, including the Historic Resources Ordinance, application of design guidelines for historical resources, use of the State Historical Building Code, and the historical resource provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act.

## Goal CI-7

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Foster the public's understanding and appreciation of Livermore's historical resources.



### Policies

**Policy CI-7.1 Public Knowledge and Education of Historical Resources and Preservation**

Educate the community about historic preservation programs and the significance of events, places, and people related to Livermore history and the region. Collaborate with public and private schools to support integrating local history into their curricula and related educational programs.

**Policy CI-7.2 Historical and Cultural Organizations Collaboration**

Collaborate with local organizations to support their efforts to promote and protect historical and cultural resources.

**Policy CI-7.3 Heritage Tourism**

Promote heritage tourism, including amplifying regional and State marketing efforts.

## Goal CI-8

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Develop incentives to encourage owners of historical resources to preserve and rehabilitate their properties.



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### Policies

#### **Policy CI-8.1 Information for Historical Resources Owners**

Create educational materials on the planning review processes, design guidelines, and incentive programs available to the owners of historical resources and make the informational materials available in the Planning Department and on the City's website.

#### **Policy CI-8.2 Funding for Historical Preservation and Rehabilitation**

Use federal, State, local, and private grants, loans, and tax credits to preserve and rehabilitate historical resources. Collect, maintain, and make available to the public information on State, federal, and private incentive programs for historical resources.

#### **Policy CI-8.3 Financial Incentives**

Develop local financial incentives for owners of historical resources to use to promote the preservation and adaptive reuse of historical resources.

#### **Policy CI-8.4 Variance Incentives**

Identify potential variances or other incentives to promote historic preservation policies, such as variances in setback requirements, building code requirements, parking requirements, etc. to incentivize the preservation of historical resources.

#### **Policy CI-8.5 Mills Act**

Establish the Mills Act program to provide property owners with property tax deductions for the preservation of historical resources.

## NATURAL SETTING

Livermore has embraced its natural setting as a unique attribute that distinguishes it from the urbanized core of the San Francisco Bay Area. Livermore's location in a major metropolitan economy requires balancing anticipated change and development with protection of open space, hillside views, and natural diversity. The City has long worked to achieve this balance through the preservation of grasslands, vineyards, trees, arroyos, and other resources in and around Livermore that constitute its natural setting.

Livermore's most distinctive features are the hills and ridgelines of the Diablo Range that ring three sides of the city, most of which lie outside the city limit. The terrain ranges from gently rolling hills in the north and east to a rugged, steep mountain range in the south. The hills and mountains are broken by narrow canyons, valleys, and woodlands. Farther to the north, the topography is more moderate, with gentle hills and rangelands.

Several creeks and arroyos shape Livermore's urban fabric and connection to the natural world, including Altamont Creek, Arroyo Seco, Arroyo Mocho, Arroyo Las Positas, Collier Canyon Creek, and Arroyo del Valle. The topography and tree-lined corridors created by the arroyos are striking visual features of Livermore, especially where creeks are daylighted through parks and along trails.



*Agricultural lands span much of the Livermore Valley floor.*

Cultivated agriculture occupies large portions of the valley floor in rectangular plots with straight rows, contrasting with the contour plantings curving over the foothills. Vineyards occupy the southern portion of the valley floor, complementing and defining the urban edge. Farmhouses nestled beneath stands of trees are scattered through the agricultural areas and rangelands that surround Livermore, and windmills, barns, corrals, and fences reinforce the impression of an agrarian landscape.

## Goal CI-9

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Preserve and enhance  
Livermore's natural setting.



### Policies

#### Policy CI-9.1 Natural Features

Leverage Livermore's existing natural features, such as the arroyos and open spaces to strengthen community identity and connections.

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### **Policy CI-9.2 Protection of Hills**

Prohibit intensive development or mass grading of the hills. Development, including roads, buildings, and other structural or land coverage shall be located, sited, and designed to fit and be subordinate to the natural landforms. Under no circumstances shall development create uniform, geometrically terraced building sites that are contrary to the natural landforms and that detract, obscure, or negatively affect the visual quality of the landforms.

### **Policy CI-9.3 Ridgeline Protection**

As a means of preserving natural “ridge skylines,” no major ridgeline shall be altered to the extent that a development creates a silhouette or an artificial ridgeline results. Minor grading below the skylines and ridgelines may be authorized to accommodate development or activities otherwise consistent with these policies.

### **Policy CI-9.4 Preservation of Natural Amenities**

Identify, inventory, map, and preserve significant natural amenities throughout the city, including, but not limited to, hillsides, ridges, peaks, vineyards, agricultural areas, waterways, and tree stands.

### **Policy CI-9.5 Land Alterations**

Require a grading permit for the alteration of natural or artificial land contours with the objective to preserve and enhance the natural topography and vegetation in developable areas.

### **Policy CI-9.6 Water-Adjacent Developments**

Ensure development adjacent to streams, canals, reservoirs, and other bodies of water is consistent with the Citywide Design Guidelines for preserving their natural scenic qualities or enhancing them through design and treatments that emphasize naturalistic forms.



*Livermore’s agricultural lands and open spaces define a unique natural character that distinguishes the community from the urbanized core of the Bay Area.*

## SCENIC RESOURCES

Livermore's location in the Livermore Valley provides topographical and visual diversity looking outwards from the city. Views of the surrounding hillsides are a distinctive visual characteristic and important amenity of the city. Hill and ridgeline views are available from many vantage points within the city limit. Mount Diablo is visible to the northwest of Livermore, and Brushy Peak is prominent to the northeast. The ridgelines along the San Antonio Reservoir; Delle Valle Regional Park; and Cedar, Bald, and Eagle Mountains creates a near visually contiguous ridgeline that frames views to the south. The Pleasanton Ridge backdrops views to the west and the Altamont hills to the east.

Interstate (I-)580, State Route Highway 84, and many of Livermore's other transportation corridors, including trails, provide some of the best views of Livermore's setting within the surrounding hillsides and ridgelines. Policies and actions in this General Plan specifically seek to preserve and protect scenic views from these public corridors through control of grading, building height, architectural and landscape design. Scenic vantage corridors are shown on **Figure CI-1**.

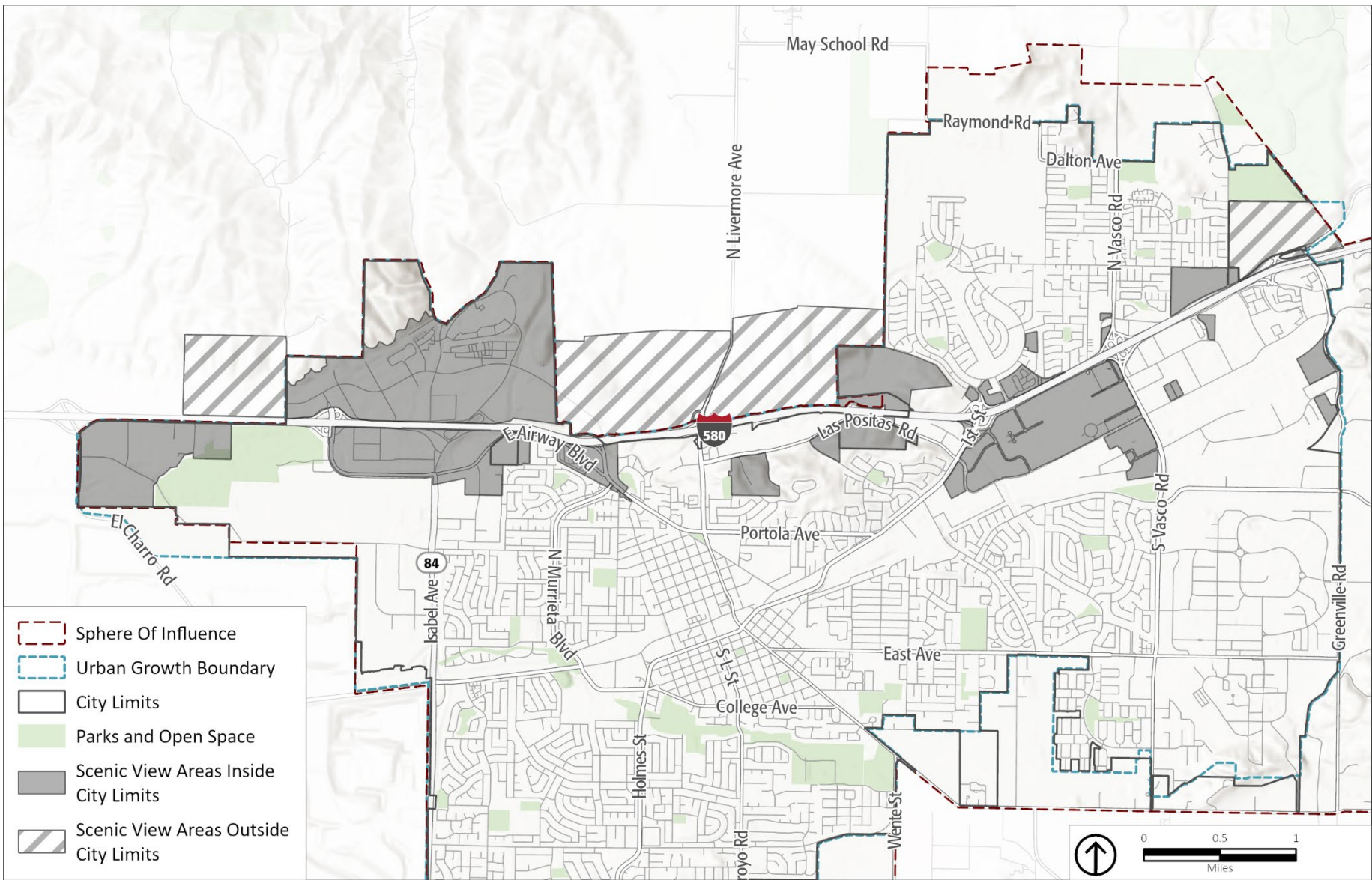
**Figure CI-2** illustrates locations that provide opportunities to experience a variety of views or partial views of the city's scenic resources. These include the rolling hills, ridgelines, prominent peaks, and other natural features that form the backdrop to the Livermore Valley. From these vantage points, visitors and residents can appreciate the visual character that defines Livermore's identity. Each Scenic View Area is governed by context-specific planning documents, such as a Specific Plan or the Livermore Development Code, to ensure that development and improvements achieve the City's broader goals and preserve and enhance views while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding environment.



*Livermore's scenic resources include the surrounding open space, which adds to the city's visual identity and supports the surrounding tourism and recreational opportunities.*



Figure CI-2 Livermore Scenic View Areas



Source: City of Livermore, 2021; Esri, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025

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### Protect scenic views of areas surrounding Livermore.



#### Policies

**Policy CI-10.1 Scenic Resource Protection**

Promote views of Livermore’s surrounding scenic resources from key public vantage points, including local streets, gateways, parks, and trails to contribute to the city’s identity and enhance the visual experience for residents and visitors.

**Policy CI-10.2 Scenic Resource Coordination**

Coordinate with regional agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, and landowners to protect and enhance views of scenic landscapes beyond Livermore’s city limits, ensuring development and land uses are consistent with the natural setting and Livermore’s identity.

**Policy CI-10.3 Architectural and Landscape Design**

Within the Scenic Resource areas, ensure high-quality architectural and landscape design to enhance the Livermore scenic character, preserve and frame identified scenic views, promote compatibility with the natural skyline, and create an intriguing and inviting entry into the community.

**Policy CI-10.4 Scenic View Areas Context-Sensitive Design**

Apply context-sensitive design and development standards to new development within Scenic View Areas, as shown in Figure CI-2, to protect and enhance scenic resources and protect views of designated scenic vistas, while ensuring that development supports the City’s broader goals for housing, economic vitality, and sustainable growth.

## LIGHTING AND GLARE

The nighttime environment and night sky are important to the scenic identity of Livermore. Visibility of the night sky can be obscured by artificial outdoor light and glare, also known as light pollution. DarkSky International defines light pollution as the “human-made alteration of outdoor light levels from those occurring naturally.” In addition to adversely impacting the visual quality of the nighttime environment and disturbing human vision and sleep, light pollution can disrupt wildlife, such as migratory birds, pollinators, and mammals. Outdoor artificial light cannot be eliminated as it is essential for safety and functionality of the city at night, but the City can regulate, design, and maintain lights to be at levels that minimize light pollution of the nighttime environment.

### The Five Principles of Responsible Outdoor Lighting

DarkSky International and the Illuminating Engineering Society jointly developed and published the following principles for preventing and reducing light pollution:

1. **Useful:** Use light only if it is needed.
2. **Targeted:** Direct light so it falls only where it is needed.
3. **Low Level:** Light should be no brighter than necessary.
4. **Controlled:** Use light only when it is needed.
5. **Warm-colored:** Use warmer color lights when possible.

## Goal CI-11

Protect the nighttime sky of Livermore as a significant scenic resource.



### Policies

#### Policy CI-11.1 Nighttime Sky

Designate the nighttime sky of Livermore as a significant scenic resource of Livermore.

#### Policy CI-11.2 Glare from Developments

Require developments to minimize obtrusive glare and wasted energy from excessive nighttime lighting and preserve views of the nighttime sky.

## GATEWAYS



*Gateways can establish positive first impressions of the community.*

Gateways are the entries to a city, district, or neighborhood. They act as a point of distinction between different areas and contribute to a sense of arrival when entering a place. Most gateways in Livermore are associated with the city's major transportation corridors. These include Interstate 580 offramps, Stanley Boulevard, Jack London Boulevard, Vallecitos Road, Vineyard Avenue, Vasco Road, Livermore Avenue, and Greenville Road.

In Livermore, gateways mark the entrance to Livermore's Downtown and the Livermore Valley wine region in South Livermore. Key gateways to Downtown are the intersections of North Livermore Avenue at Railroad Avenue, First Street at Inman Street, and Holmes Street at First Street, some of which feature landscaping and public art that speak to Livermore's unique identity.

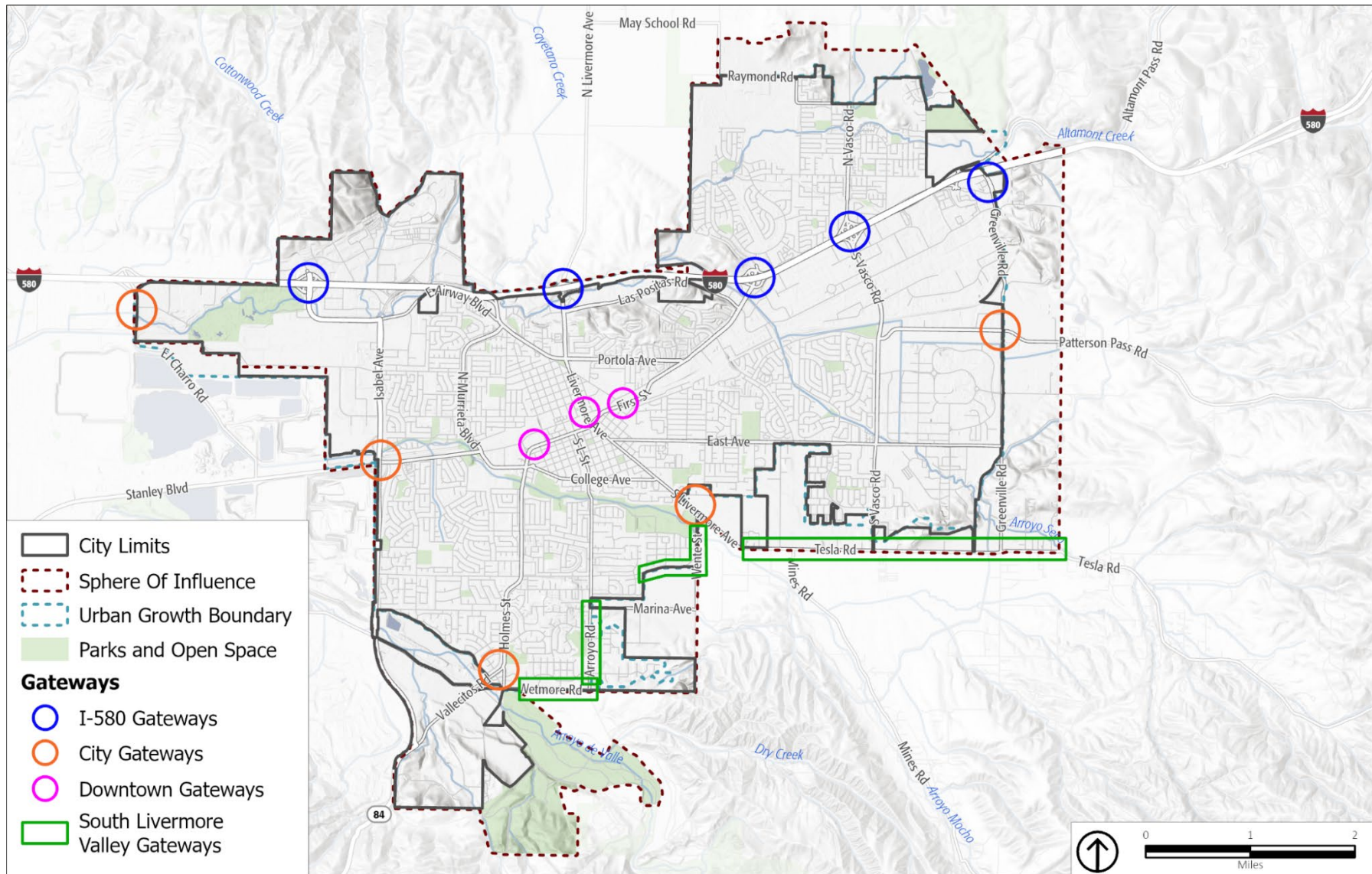
South Livermore Avenue at Concannon Road is the key gateway to the South Livermore Valley wine region. The transition from the built environment of Livermore to a terrain of vineyards, clusters of winery buildings, and agricultural fields defines the edge into the valley. This interface can also be felt prominently along Tesla Road, Wetmore Road, Concannon Boulevard, and Arroyo Road. The gateways and edges described can be seen in **Figure CI-3, Gateways**.

Addressing transitions between two environments of different scales or landscapes is a key way to signal boundaries and distinguish two areas. Transitions in Livermore predominantly occur between agricultural land or open space and residential areas, as well as from open space outside of the city limit to low-density residential neighborhoods, to higher-density residential neighborhoods surrounding commercial centers and the Downtown. This gradual transition in density and form helps integrate neighborhoods with each other as well as integrate Livermore with its natural and agricultural surroundings.

Gateways mark key points of entry into Livermore and help define transitions between distinct areas, such as from open space to neighborhoods or from commercial to industrial districts. Gateways are enhanced through landscaping, public art, and changes in form and scale that reflect the community's values. These transitions enhance Livermore's identity by reinforcing a sense of place and integrating the built environment with its natural and agricultural surroundings

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**Figure CI-3 Gateways**



Source: City of Livermore, 2021; Esri, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

## Goal CI-12

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Enhance the city's gateways with improvements that represent the multiple facets of Livermore's identity.



### Policies

**Policy CI-12.1 Focused Commercial Development**

To protect visual quality at entrances to the city along the freeway, limit highway commercial development to areas immediately adjacent to freeway interchanges.

**Policy CI-12.2 Enhanced Architectural Design**

New development at major gateways (see **Figure CI-3**), must include site, landscape, and architectural improvements that create a strong sense of arrival and reflect Livermore's unique identity. Require undergrounding of utility service connections on private property to enhance the visual quality of gateway areas.

**Policy CI-12.3 Aesthetically Pleasing Uses**

For new developments near major entrances to the city, favor uses that are aesthetically pleasing and would provide a high-quality design that will benefit its location as a gateway to the city.

**Policy CI-12.4 Public Landscape and Sculptures**

Develop and maintain City-funded landscape features and/or sculptures at gateways and entries to the city.

# URBAN DESIGN



*Thoughtful urban design can help facilitate social interaction, walking, biking, and economic development.*

Urban design is the design of the built environment. It considers the relationship of buildings, spaces, streets, and their setting to create human-scale environments that enable people to connect and relate to places. Enhancing quality of life and the built environment is a key goal of urban design.

A strong urban design framework contributes immensely to the identity of a city. It reflects the aesthetic and functional goals of the community by guiding style, scale, and placement of buildings, structures, and spaces. Effective implementation of urban design goals and principles creates coherence and hierarchy in the built environment, making the city both attractive and navigable for people of all abilities.

Urban design requires a tailored approach within and between Livermore’s residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional areas. Urban design goals and policies may focus on preserving the quality of one area, while focusing on evolution or enhancement in another.

# Goal CI-13

Maintain high standards of urban design in Livermore.



## Policies

### Policy CI-13.1 Design Review and Standards

Require all new development and redevelopment to be subject to design review, consistent with State law. Maintain and routinely update the City’s Design Standards and Guidelines, including objective design standards for residential and mixed-use development, to ensure high-quality design, regulatory consistency, and review efficiency.

### Policy CI-13.2 Process Streamlining

Explore opportunities to streamline the design review process and standards to improve efficiency while maintaining high-quality design.

### Policy CI-13.3 High-Quality, Contextual, and Human-Scaled Design

Require high-quality design that addresses community, site, building, and landscape design. New development and redevelopment shall consider the context and character of surrounding land uses and incorporate human-scale, pedestrian-oriented features to create an engaging and compatible built environment.

### Policy CI-13.4 Sustainable Design Requirements

Where appropriate, require design and amenities in new development and redevelopment that promote sustainability and improve the public realm, including, but not limited to:

- a. Interconnected street layout
- b. Clustering of buildings
- c. Landscaping on each lot
- d. Facilitating pedestrian activity



**Policy CI-13.5 Traditional Design Elements**

Where appropriate, require new development to incorporate traditional site and architectural design elements consistent with Livermore’s character and western heritage. This may include grid street layouts, narrower streets, detached sidewalks, street trees, reduced setbacks, front porches or stoops, and rear- or side-loaded garages, unless alternative design guidance is adopted by the City Council.

**Policy CI-13.6 Active Ground Floors and Public Realm**

Promote active ground floors through high-quality public realm design to enhance street-level activity, walkability, and neighborhood vibrancy.



**Policy CI-13.7 Single-Family Housing Scale Consistency**

Avoid construction of single-family homes that are out of scale with surrounding homes.

**Policy CI-13.8 Initial Landscaping**

Require all new development and redevelopment to landscape front yard and public street-facing areas upon initial construction using climate-appropriate, water-efficient, and sustainable practices; and require residents and property owners to maintain their property in good condition to support neighborhood quality and visual character. Encourage the use of xeriscaping, drought-tolerant plant species, and efficient irrigation systems to promote long-term water conservation and climate resilience.



**Policy CI-13.9 Design Process Efficiency**

Explore opportunities to streamline design review processes while maintaining high-quality design outcomes. This includes developing and promoting the use of preapproved building designs and styles across the city and in Specific Plan areas, as well as improving the efficiency and clarity of sign design review standards.

**Policy CI-13.10 Legislative Advocacy**

Support State legislation that enhances local discretion over design review and discretionary design decisions to ensure high-quality standards that represent Livermore’s unique identity. Oppose State legislation that reduces local authority to preserve high-quality urban design and architecture.

# Goal CI-14

**Incorporate graceful transitions between areas of different uses and scales.**



## Policies

### **Policy CI-14.1 Landscaped Buffers**

Determine where landscaped buffers should be required to create transitions between different land use categories, such as between residential and industrial areas.

### **Policy CI-14.2 Distinguishable Neighborhood Designs**

Require the design of new neighborhoods to incorporate themes and features that delineate and distinguish them from one another.

### **Policy CI-14.3 Missing-Middle Housing**

Allow and encourage middle housing development types, such as duplexes, multiplexes, townhouses, courtyard apartments, carriage houses, and bungalow courts, to provide a transition between residential areas of different densities.

### **Policy CI-14.4 Infill Design Integration**

Where appropriate, require infill development to incorporate design features of the existing neighborhood and adjacent buildings to visually integrate them into the existing community fabric.

### **Policy CI-14.5 Gated Communities**

Prohibit the establishment of gated communities, except senior residential complexes.

## Goal CI-15

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**Maintain high-quality design of public facilities.**



### Policies

**Policy CI-15.1 Street Width Standards Review**

Periodically review and revise, as necessary, street width standards to address emergency vehicle access while also providing for the narrowest streets possible to enhance walkability and urban design character.

**Policy CI-15.2 Attractive Street Furniture System**

Continue to implement an attractive, coordinated system of “street furniture,” including fire hydrants, litter containers, paving patterns, planters, signposts, traffic signals, benches, and light standards.

**Policy CI-15.3 Street Corridors**

Identify, map, design, and implement major street corridors throughout the city. Each major street corridor shall include high-quality urban design features like generously landscaped medians and backing lots, quality and consistent backing lot walls and fences, large shade tree species, separated sidewalks, and consistent and artistic public facilities like light poles, pedestrian benches, and litter bins.

**Policy CI-15.4 Screening of Visually Unattractive Public Facilities**

Adequately screen visually unattractive or incompatible public facilities, such as sewer lift stations, pump houses, water tanks, and other major infrastructure from public view, where feasible.