

Functioning as Laytonville’s Main Street and primary commercial corridor, Highway 101 plays a significant role in the community’s image and circulation patterns. Establishing distinct boundaries for the Town Center and enhancing its identity will help distinguish it from the surrounding area. The following chapter describes methods for indicating the extents of Laytonville’s Town Center, as well as for enhancing its identity and character.

A. Focus Area

A key component of the community’s vision for its future is the establishment of a clearly defined Town Center with distinctive qualities visually indicating its function and position within the larger community. Highway 101’s dual function as a regional connector and the town’s main street poses a unique challenge for the community as it develops its Town Center.

Therefore, a close examination of the Highway 101 corridor through Laytonville is critical to understanding the forces shaping the area. The Focus Area encompasses Laytonville’s main activity centers, the Highway 101 corridor connecting them, the intersection of Highway 101 and Branscomb/Dos Rios Roads and the adjacent areas.

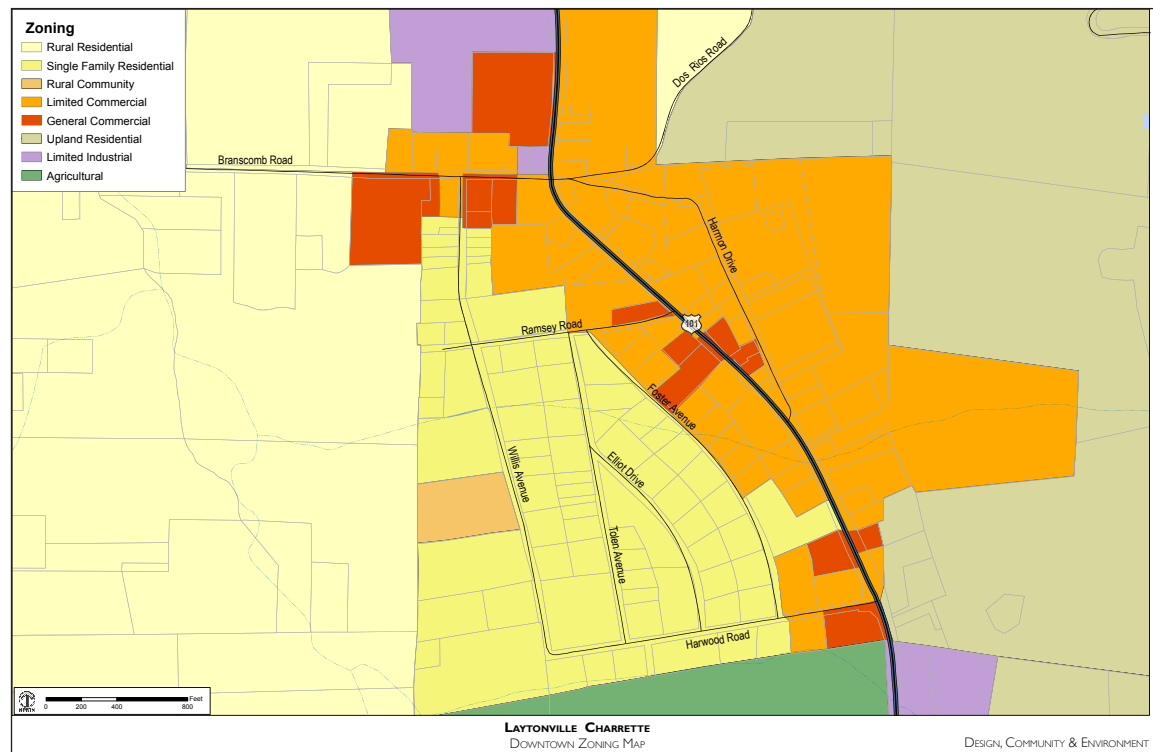


Figure 4-1 indicates the general boundaries and zoning of Town Center.

B. Transitions

As with the identification of key locations and connections across Laytonville, the community provided extensive feedback regarding the location of transition points along Highway 101. These transition points indicate where physical transitions currently occur and cause natural speed changes.

Transition points represent appropriate locations for gateway features, enhanced signage, and changes in the posted speed limit. Additionally, the identified transition points demarcate a change in uses, density and design along Highway 101, signaling the transition into and out of the Town Center.



Figure 4-2 identifies the locations of Laytonville's key transition points.

C. Recommendations

1. Create Gateways

Gateways provide important visual cues to both local and regional drivers, create opportunities to highlight historic and natural features, and enhance the image and identity of the Town Center. The creation of key gateways along Highway 101 will signify entry into Laytonville's Town Center, further establishing its boundaries and distinguishing it from the surrounding area.

- Create prominent gateway features at key intersections and transition points.
- Utilize gateway features to increase awareness of physical and land use changes and to slow traffic accordingly.
- Incorporate public art, sculptures, special landscaping treatments, enhanced signage, historic elements, signature lighting or street furniture in designated gateway locations.
- Position gateways to maximize visibility along the Highway 101 corridor without reducing driver safety.
- Establish gateways at the following locations:

- a) Southern Gateway into Laytonville near Long Valley Lumber
 - b) Northern Gateway into Laytonville near Boomer's
 - c) Southern edge of the Laytonville Town Center at Harmon Triangle
- Square off the intersection of Harmon Drive and Highway 101 to increase safety and enhance the Town Center gateway.



Figure 4-4 provides an illustrative photo simulation of a potential gateway treatment for the Northern Gateway into Laytonville's Town Center.



Figure 4-5 provides an illustrative photo simulation of a potential gateway treatment for the Southern Gateway into Laytonville's Town Center.



Figure 4-3 indicates the locations of the proposed gateway features.



Figure 4-6 Gateway in Rio Dell, Humboldt County.



Figure 4-7 Historic Gateway at Branscomb Road and 101.

2. Improve Signage

Providing orientation and transition cues, signage communicates important information to the community, visitors and through-travelers alike. Signs support area businesses by calling attention to available goods and services, while contributing to a home-town atmosphere. Signage can communicate important information about the community, significantly impacting its character and identity.

- Incorporate distinctive, attractive and visible signage to enhance the Town Center's image.
- Install a sign at the crossroads of Branscomb/ Dos Rios Rd. and Highway 101 indicating a scenic route to the coast.
- Utilize signage and banners to announce community events in order to promote community engagement and bolster community pride.
- Utilize local talent to design and paint signs.



Figure 4-8 A sign in Willits, CA indicates a route to the coast.

For additional guidance regarding the design and placement of signage, refer to Chapter 7, Design Guidelines, of this report.

3. Develop Distinctive Streetscaping

The inclusion of distinctive and consistently placed landscaping elements creates a sense of place, enhances the identity of an area and provides an attractive buffer between the right-of-way and adjacent uses.

- Provide visible and continuous landscaping along Highway 101 between the Southern and Northern Gateways.
- Establish a coherent and consistent palette for landscaping along Highway 101 within the Town Center.
- Utilize landscaping features to visually narrow the right-of-way and encourage reduced driving speeds through the Town Center.
- Incorporate student art into sidewalks and streetscapes in the Town Center to create a distinct sense of place.

For additional recommendations regarding the use and placement of landscaping within the Town Center, refer to Chapter 7, Design Guidelines, of this report.



Figure 4-9 Tiles made by High School students could be incorporated into sidewalks.



Figure 4-10 Sidewalk art in Encinitas, CA.