





IDENTITY

INSIDE THIS CHAPTER:

This chapter discusses the identity and branding of Simpsonville.

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- District Elements
- Proposed Gateway Illustration
- Core District Illustration



Example of a Gateway Feature

IDENTITY & BRANDING

A particular district or area can define a city. The Village Center will, over time, become a defining point of Simpsonville. It will provide a community identity to those outside of Simpsonville and a community focal point for the residents of Simpsonville. For this reason, a defined and cohesive image or identity is essential.

An area can be branded by various elements, including the district's name. Another equally important manner of branding an area is to maintain a similar type of treatment for street lighting, landscaping and street furniture. This can visually define the boundaries of the Village Center and tell residents and visitors when they have entered the Village Center.

DEFINING THE DISTRICT'S NAME

A name can bring about a particular or distinct image into people's minds. The term "downtown" suggests a sense of urgency and density. It alludes to tall buildings and busy sidewalks. As the scale becomes smaller, the term "town center" suggests pedestrian scaled buildings, sidewalk activity and a sense of community. Finally, the term "village" is yet smaller in scale and reflects a focus on locally owned businesses of a smaller community.

These three scales of development were discussed and public input preferred the terms village or town center. Public comments overwhelmingly showed that residents wanted this area to be unique and focus on the culture of Simpsonville. The concept of "Village Center at Simpsonville" emerged from the dialogue during the public meetings.

DEFINING THE PHYSICAL ELEMENTS

As discussed, the physical elements or amenities can visually define and create an identity for the Village Center. Amenities also serve many small but important functions such as providing places to sit or rest. The amenities for the Village Center have been divided into first priority and second priority. The first priority amenities should be the initial focus when development occurs and as infrastructure improvements are being made. The second priority amenities should be programmed into the long term vision and added over time as funding allows.

The amenities described below offer the best opportunity for Simpsonville to convey its community identity, while simultaneously providing for the needs for residents and visitors where they will have the greatest impact. Based on public comments, the overall design of the amenities should be simple and traditional; no period or themed amenities should be used. The durability, lifetime cost, functionality, and ease of maintenance should also be considered when specifying a particular catalog item.

The following describes each amenity and shows a representative photo(s).

FIRST PRIORITY AMENITIES

Lighting

Along U.S. 60, there is a need for both pedestrian and vehicular lighting and these two separate scales of lighting need to be accommodated. Consideration should be given to specifying a light pole which can accommodate both pedestrian and vehicular lighting as well as other desirable amenities, such as hanging flower baskets, banners, flags, or special event decorations. The design of the pole and light fixtures should be simple and traditional.

The location of each lamp will depend on the final catalog lamp chosen and should be based on industry lighting standards such as the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

Permanent Landscaping

Permanent landscaping includes the vegetation that is not replaced on an annual or semi-annual basis. This includes street trees, parking lot vegetation and stormwater planters. Public comments from the public meetings ranked permanent landscaping as the highest priority for amenities. Therefore, a large focus should be placed on ensuring this is incorporated into the final street design.

Street trees provide an inviting atmosphere and soften the hard edges of the buildings. In order to maintain visibility of businesses, the street trees should be columnar shaped trees and be a species proven to thrive in the harsh environment of a downtown. Tree placement should be considered in order to allow storefront visibility. The tree wells should be adequately sized for tree growth and be placed in the carriage strip of the sidewalk.

Surface parking lots can detract from the visual appearance of the streetscape and overall area. Public comments encouraged the use of screening parking lots with landscaping in order to enhance the surrounding area. Screening parking lots with landscaping or a buffer between the parking lot and sidewalk / street can also help to maintain the separation of vehicles and pedestrians. The City and Planning Commission should also review the zoning regulations on landscaping within the Village Center.



Preferred Lighting Example



Preferred Permanent Landscaping Example



Preferred Bench Example

Finally, stormwater planters should be considered in areas with stormwater management issues or areas where runoff can be controlled in this manner. The life-cycle costs and benefits of reduced runoff of this landscaping option should be considered in decisions on their location.

Benches

The bench design should, like all of the amenities, be simple and traditional. Clean lines and simple colors can reinforce the district's identity. The optimal placement of street benches is within the carriage strip in a location that will get afternoon shade during the summer months. Additionally, boutiques, theaters, museums and other uses where some members of a party may need to wait on others are uses that typically benefit from the placement of a bench.



Preferred Accent Landscaping Example

Accent Landscaping

Accent landscaping includes plants that need annual or semi-annual maintenance or planting such as flowering beds or large pots. Accent landscaping can add color to the streetscape. If large pots are used, they can vary in size but should be consistent in style. Approved species of vegetation should also be developed to provide consistency within the Village Center.



Preferred Street Banner Style

Street Banners / Graphics

Street banners or graphics can reinforce a district logo or name in addition to publicizing a particular local event or festival. The street banners can remain the same or be changed seasonally. All street banner designs should show the Village Center name and/or logo and should aim to incorporate local culture, such as Simpsonville's reputation as the "American Saddlebred Horse Capital of the World."

Trash Receptacles

It is recommended that trash receptacles be located at all intersections along U.S. 60 and at mid-block locations within the Core District. They should also be placed near entrances to uses that tend to generate waste, such as restaurants or stores that sell food items.



Preferred Trash Receptacle Example

All waste receptacles should provide ease of use to the pedestrian - wide openings, free of spring loaded doors - and easy access to waste collection by city employees or waste collection contractors. The style should be consistent with the other amenities with a simple and traditional design.

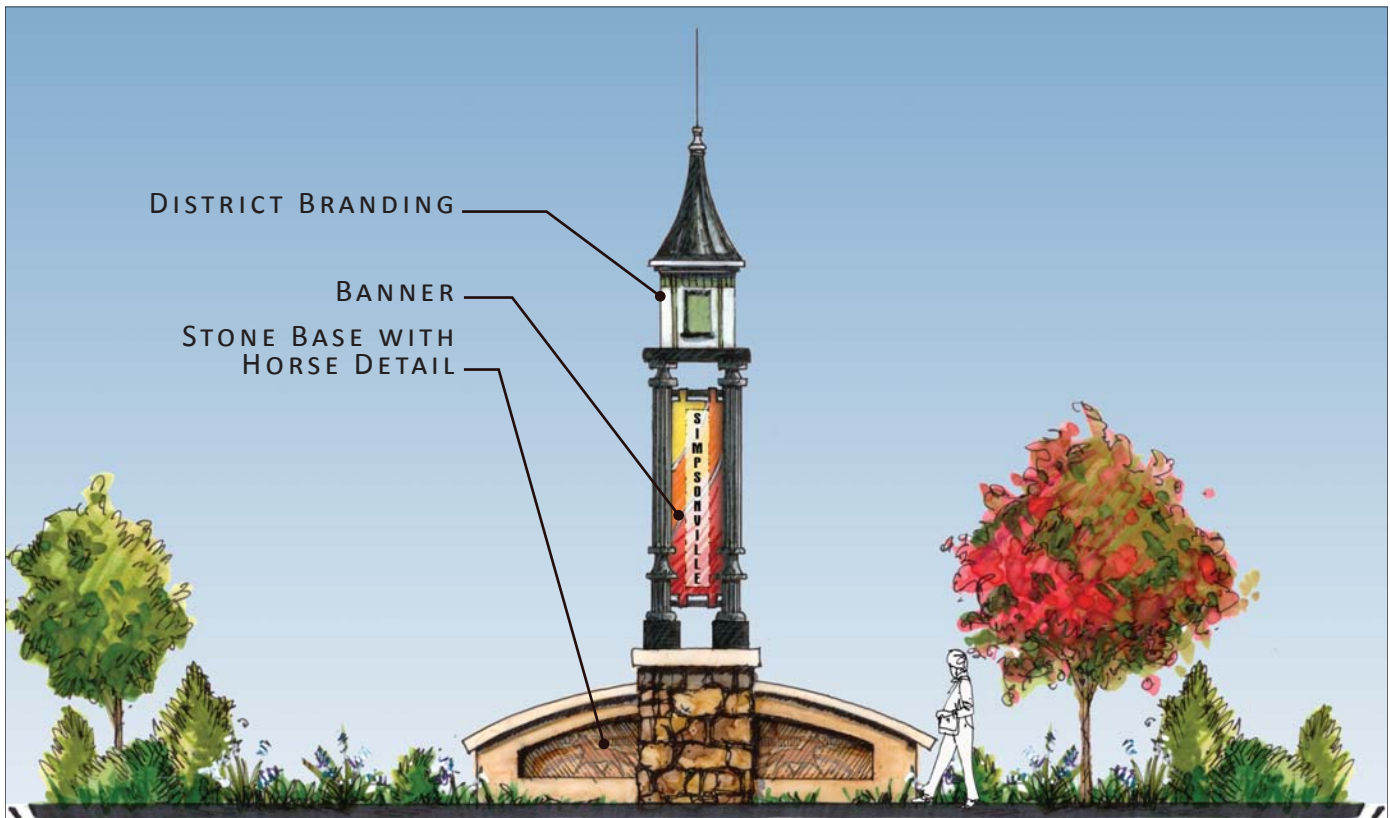


Illustration of Gateway: U.S. 60 and KY-1848

SECOND PRIORITY AMENITIES:

Gateway Treatment

By defining the entrance points into an area, it clearly depicts when someone has entered the Village Center. It can reinforce the identity or brand of the district in addition to further defining its character. Gateway treatments can range in complexity from a simple monument sign to elaborate construction projects that transform the roadway. To reflect the character of Simpsonville, the gateway treatments for the Village Center should be simple and reinforce the district’s branding.

The Village Center gateway is shown in the illustration above. While the illustration does not represent the final design, it is intended to portray the visual image of Simpsonville. The spire image represents the equine history and culture of Simpsonville while the banner allows for a simple identification of the City. Detailing in the stone base should portray Simpsonville’s rich history as the “American Saddlebred Horse Capitol of the World.”



Example Public Art - Sculpture Serves as a Bicycle Rack

Public Art

Public art can allow for interpretation of local customs, culture and traditions. A committee can be created that commissions local artists to design pieces of art for particular locations within the Village Center. The pieces of art can also serve a particular function, such as a bicycle rack.

Pedestrian Signage

A reliable, pedestrian oriented wayfinding signage system is a hospitality tool which encourages visitors and residents to walk between destinations by providing accurate and reliable prompts to major walkable destinations. It is crucial for these elements be kept up-to-date with current information. All directional signage should have a consistent design and color scheme and depict the district's name and/or logo.



Example Pedestrian Signage



Preferred Bicycle Rack Example

Bicycle Racks

It is important to accommodate users of all modes of transportation including bicycles. By providing specific areas for bicycle parking, users are less enthralled to use other amenities, such as light poles or benches, as areas to lock bicycles. It also allows these users to easily use the businesses within the area.

Vehicular Signage

Vehicular signage is intended to direct vehicles to attractions within the Village Center, such as parking, public gathering spaces or major destinations. Information on all signage should be kept up-to-date and all directional signage should have a consistent design and color scheme and depict the district's name and / or logo.



Example Vehicular Signage

VILLAGE CENTER PLAZA

Based on public comments, there was a strong desire to create a community focal point or gathering space. The concept of a Village Center Plaza emerged from the public meetings as a space where community events and daily interactions would occur. The fountain represents a focal point while the plaza is lined with additional commercial or retail space. This plaza is pedestrian oriented and provides a necessary connection between rear parking areas and U.S. 60. The character of Simpsonville is continued throughout the plaza as the same amenities and landscaping are used throughout the Village Center.

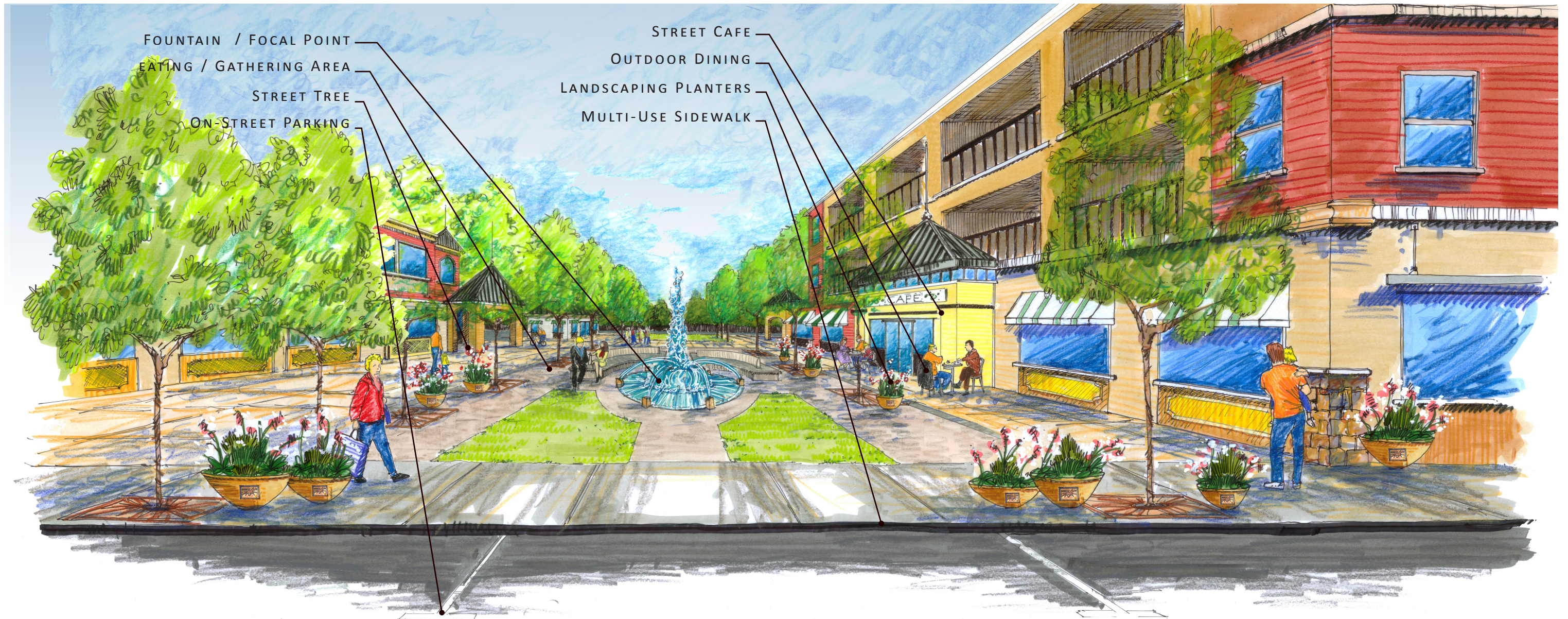


Illustration of the Village Center Plaza



"Progressive Community with Hometown Spirit"

INCORPORATING CULTURE AND HISTORY: THE AMERICAN SADDLEBRED HORSE CAPITOL OF THE WORLD

Simpsonville’s rich culture and history as the “American Saddlebred Horse Capitol of the World” is a distinctive and unique element to portray within the Village Center. It is important to tell this story to residents and visitors alike in order to further set the Village Center apart from other commercial or retail areas. This can be done through physical elements of the streetscape, interpretive art or educational signs.

The elements to the left depict some of the detailing that could be incorporated into the final design of the streetscape elements. A horse emblem can be created for the plantings as well as for tree grates. These should be used in simple applications and not overused. The subtle details will reinforce this culture and history to residents and visitors.

Interpretive pieces of art can be commissioned by local or regional artists that tell residents and visitors of Simpsonville’s culture. This could be through creative paving markings, sculptures or a variety of other mediums. Educational information can also be provided through signs or markers that tell Simpsonville’s story.



Horse details in Streetscape Elements



"Progressive Community with Hometown Spirit"
