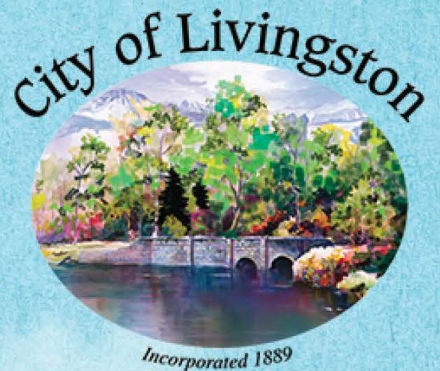


# LIVINGSTON GATEWAYS VISIONING WORKSHOP



## Workshop Summary & Recommendations Memo

5.15.2024

Prepared By:

**CRESCENDO**

PLANNING + DESIGN

In Collaboration With:



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## Executive Summary:

Consultants from Crescendo Planning & Design and Robert Peccia & Associates were tasked with conducting a workshop to assist City of Livingston Staff in engaging their community on the topic of Gateways into and out of the community. This topic - expressed more broadly at the time as Gateway Overlay Zones - was one of many discussed at a high-level during the 2021 Growth Policy effort, and it has been a common theme in the community input received in the on-going Downtown Master Plan process. As the Downtown Master Plan nears completion, and the City looks to update its Zoning Code, it was identified as an important conversation to revisit and elaborate upon.

Main takeaways from the visioning workshop are as follows:

- Workshop participants expressed generally consistent support for many of the types of Gateway Treatments discussed and shown during the workshop, including in the expression of the level of appropriateness of the examples shown from other communities; however, in the large group discussion format, and in the small group exercises, there was also a clear desire to find ways to express gateways in Livingston, without compromising the rural/open space character at the City's edges.
- Identity and authenticity - often challenging attributes to define and gain consensus on - were consistently high priorities in all conversations, with the greatest consensus revolving around expressions of the history of the City of Livingston, and of the lands and nature upon which the City is now located.
- Many participants expressed frustration around the character of development along the edges of town at the highway entrances/exits, particularly in comparison to the rich architectural character of the Downtown and the neighborhoods in Livingston. This was often linked with a concern that the "first impression" of Livingston for highway users not only does not live up to the City's reputation, and is not compelling enough to encourage a visit.
- Of the 3 primary groupings of Gateway Treatments explored - Signage, Public Art & Landscaping; Land Use, Building Form & Articulation; and Roadway Changes - the greatest support was shown for a mix of the first two groupings. Generally, at the Western edge of the City, there was a preference for using Signage to signal the arrival to Livingston, with a more well-designed mix of uses as one moves east into the City; at the Southern edge of the City, there was a strong desire for higher quality development and a greater mix of Land Uses to signal the Gateway into the City, along with select locations for Signage, Public Art & Landscaping; and at the Eastern edge of the City, there was a preference for the use of Signage, Public Art & Landscaping, coupled with non-motorized trail access, and a celebration of the natural open space before one moves west into the City.

Recommendations for potential implementation actions, based upon the inputs gained in the workshop, are included on the final pages of this document.

## Workshop & Presentation Overview:

On Monday, February 26th, 2024, from 5:00 - 7:00 pm, the City of Livingston hosted a public “Gateways Visioning Workshop” in the Ballroom of the Shane Lalani Center for the Arts. Approximately 35 community members were in attendance, in addition to City staff and members of the consultant team.

The workshop began with introductory remarks from City Manager Grant Gager, who thanked everyone who made the trip (in the snow and wind) to participate in the event. The City Manager emphasized the importance of the workshop as a continuation of a conversation that had started during the 2021 Growth Policy effort, and has continued into the on-going Downtown Master Plan effort, mentioning that as the City plans to update its Zoning Code, and implement other recommendations from the Growth Policy, this would be an important step in determining how best to do so.



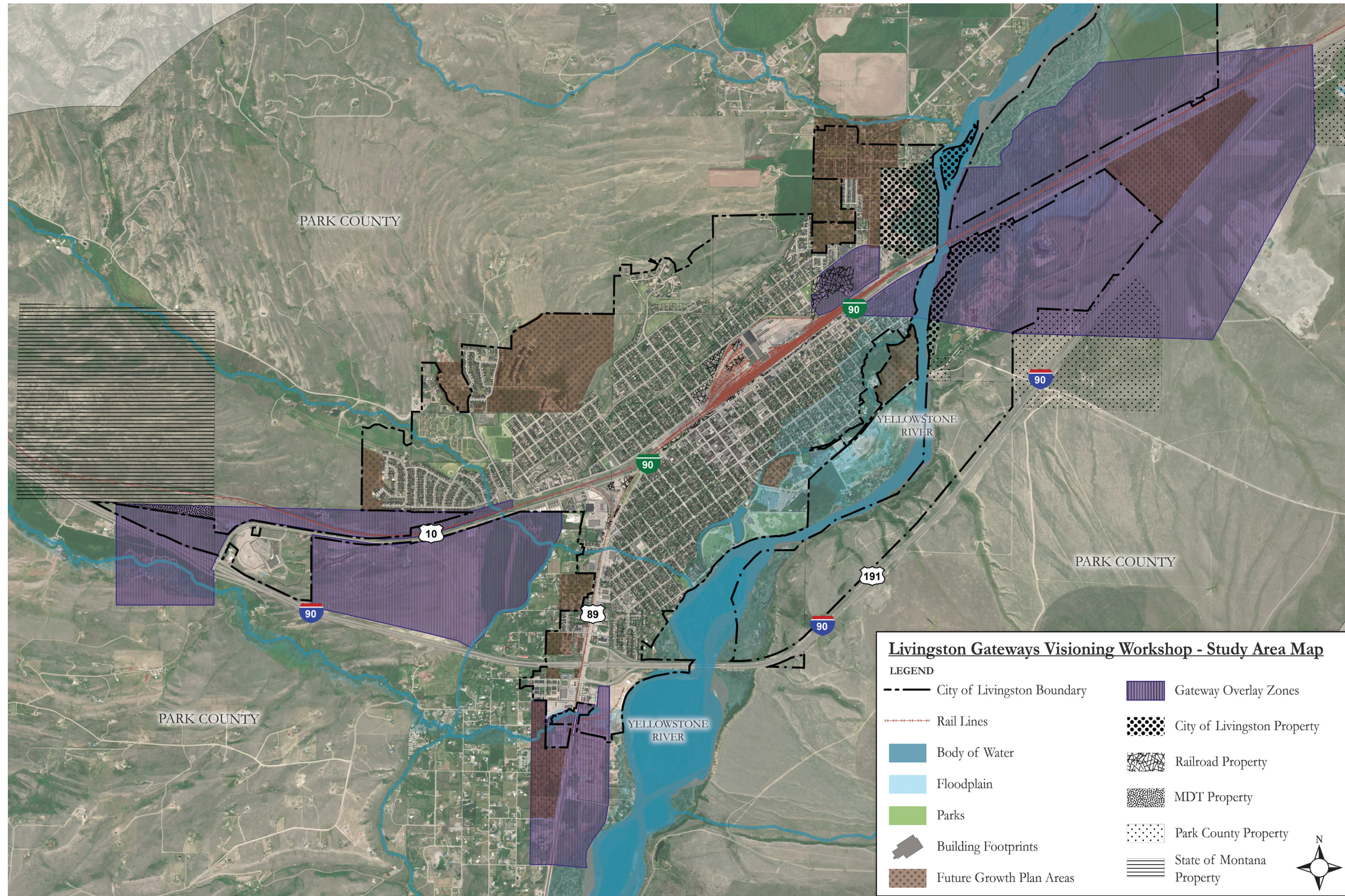
Andy Rutz, with Crescendo Planning & Design, then gave a 35-minute presentation highlighting some of the various types of Gateway treatments that peer communities to Livingston and/or other Montana communities have implemented in their cities and towns. Building this shared understanding amongst all participants

was critical to helping to achieve the overall goal of the workshop - to better understand the common gateway elements that the Livingston community desires. The presentation first reflected on Livingston’s history as the Gateway to America’s First National Park, highlighting how that relationship has evolved with the changing modes of transportation - the loss of passenger rail, build out of the highways, and the resulting modern-day gateways being defined as the highway-adjacent entry points into Livingston. The presentation then acknowledged the recent policy direction from the Growth Policy around Gateway Overlay Zones - three of which were identified (**see map on the following page**), but lack regulatory mechanisms to implement a Design Overlay District at those locations; the Building Design Standards that exist in Chapter 30 of the Zoning Code, but are not mapped to be applicable at any Gateway locations; and the on-going community conversations about Gateways that have occurred relative to the Downtown during its Master Plan process. Finally, the presentation provided examples of Gateway treatments organized into three types:

- Signage, Public Art & Landscaping
- Land Use, Building Form & Articulation
- Roadway Changes

For each type, an indication of the Type of Implementation (Physical Investment, Regulatory, and/or Infrastructure) was provided, a high-level timeline for implementation (Short-to-Long-term); and an identification of typical barriers to implementing each type of treatment. In addition, each type was then illustrated with a series of photos or renderings showing how specific communities have implemented such treatments.

**Study Area Map showing the Western, Southern & Eastern Gateway Overlay Zones, as established by the Growth Policy**

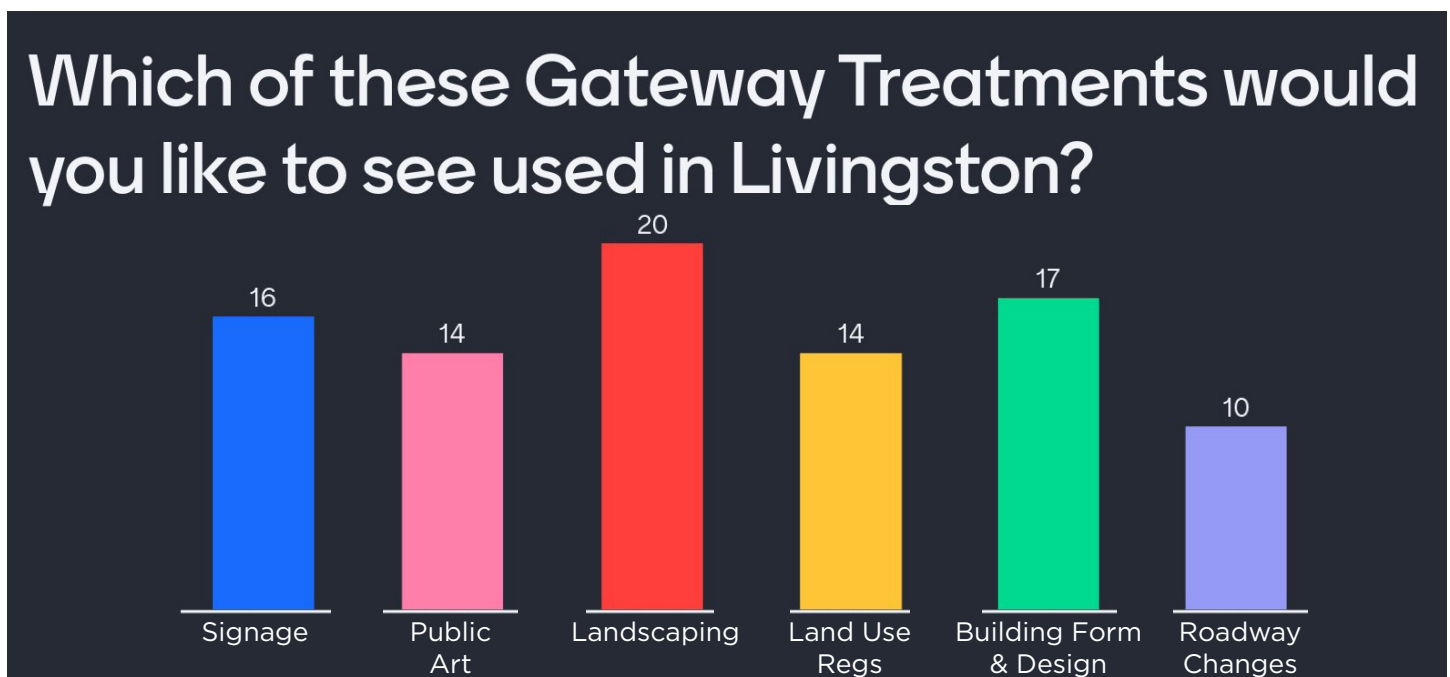


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## Mentimeter Polling Results:

Following the presentation, a polling questionnaire - utilizing the same example imagery used in the presentation - was given to attendees using the Mentimeter online polling platform. There was consistent participation from about 25 attendees in the polling exercise. In the questionnaire, facilitators collected input on those participants' preferences for each of the various types of gateway treatments that were presented. Results from that questionnaire are shown in this section of the document.

Reflecting back on the various Gateway Treatments shown during the presentation - Signage, Public Art, Landscaping, Land Use Regulations, Building Form & Design Standards, and Roadway Changes - participants were first asked to identify those that they would like to see used in Livingston, and were allowed to select as many options as they supported.



As shown in the graphic above, there was strong support for Landscaping, Building Form & Design Standards, Signage, Public Art, and Land Use Regulations, with over 50% of participants indicating their support for using those types of Gateway Treatments in Livingston. Roadway Changes were the type of treatment that received the least support, but still received support from about 40% of participants.

Next, participants in the polling exercise were asked to, "Help us gauge the appropriateness of specific treatments for Livingston." This visual preference exercise was done through the use of a red-yellow-green scale to indicate their opinions on the appropriateness of specific Gateway Treatment examples shown in precedent imagery. As shown on the following pages, participants generally expressed support for each example, with the most reservations coming on the larger scale pylon-type signage as a Gateway Treatment.

## Mentimeter Polling Results (Cont.):

Is this type of Gateway treatment worth exploring in Livingston?



1

Red

5

Yellow

17

Green

Location of example treatments shown: Big Sky, MT and Cut Bank, MT

Is this type of Gateway treatment worth exploring in Livingston?



2

Red

3

Yellow

19

Green

Location of example treatment shown: West Glacier, MT



### Mentimeter Polling Results (Cont.):

Is this type of Gateway treatment worth exploring in Livingston?



4

Red

10

Yellow

12

Green

Location of example treatment shown: Columbia Falls, MT

Is this type of Gateway treatment worth exploring in Livingston?



8

Red

13

Yellow

4

Green

Location of example treatments shown: Frederick, CO

Mentimeter Polling Results (Cont.):

Is this type of Gateway treatment worth exploring in Livingston?



5

Red

3

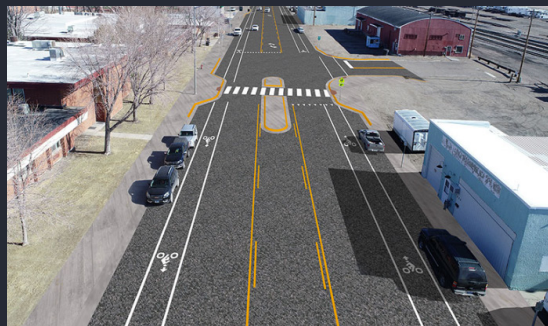
Yellow

17

Green

Location of example treatment shown: Carbondale, CO

Is this type of Gateway treatment worth exploring in Livingston?



1

Red

7

Yellow

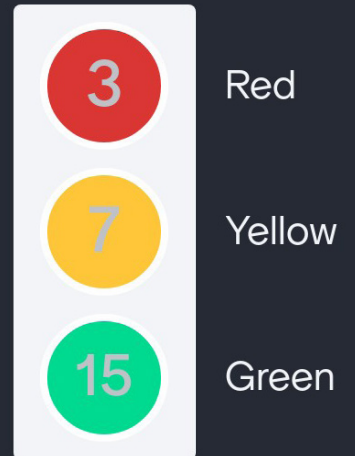
16

Green

Location of example treatments shown: Glendive, MT

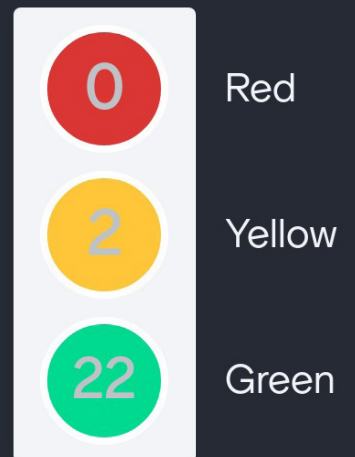
## Mentimeter Polling Results (Cont.):

Is this type of Gateway treatment worth exploring in Livingston?



Location of example treatments shown: Bozeman, MT and Helena, MT

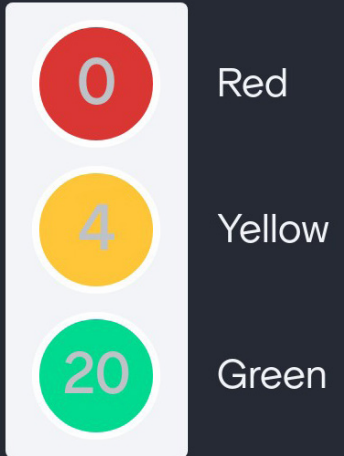
Is this type of Gateway treatment worth exploring in Livingston?



Location of example treatments shown: Whitefish, MT and Lewistown, MT

Mentimeter Polling Results (Cont.):

Is this type of Gateway treatment worth exploring in Livingston?



Location of example treatments shown: Lyons, CO

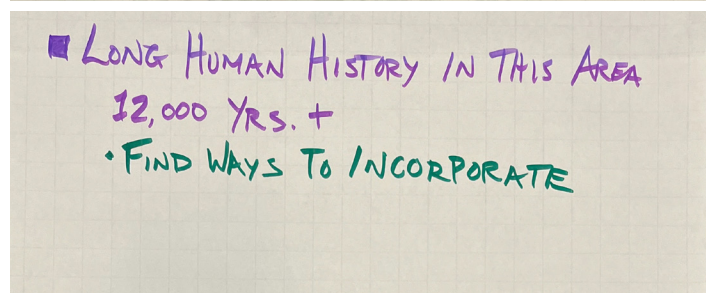
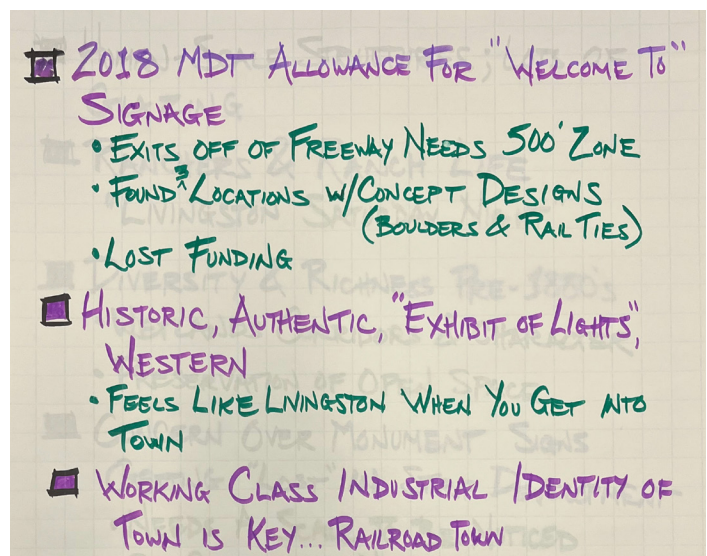
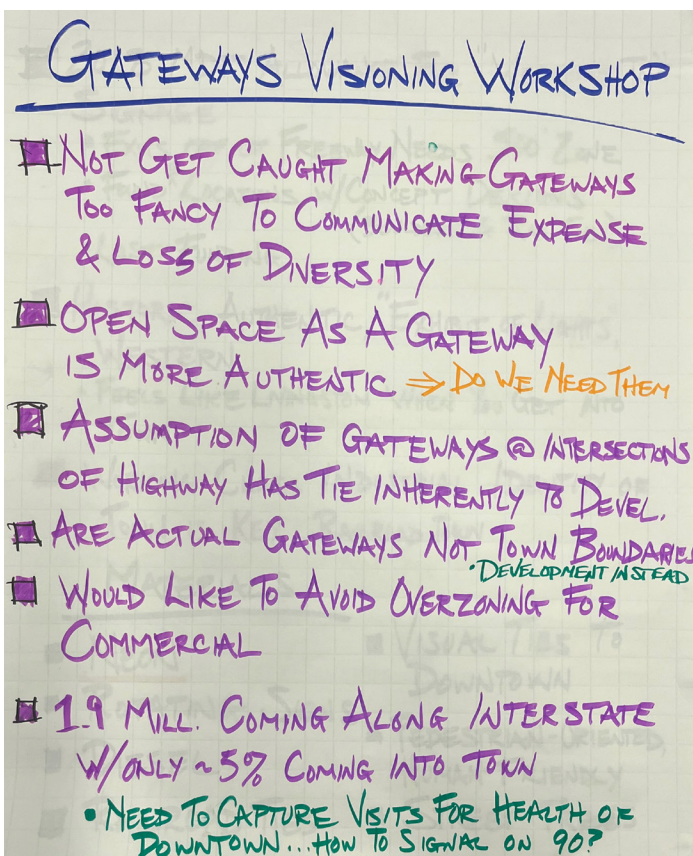
## Large Group Visioning Discussion:

For the next 25 minutes, workshop participants engaged in a large group visioning discussion, which was facilitated by the consultant team, and focused primarily on two topics:

- An opportunity for attendees to provide greater detail and insight into their initial impressions of the various Gateway Treatments that were presented, and to elaborate on which may, or may not, be appropriate to explore further for Livingston. Community members were also encouraged to contribute ideas they may have for Gateway Treatments - whether seen elsewhere, or unique to Livingston - that were not presented. Photos of the notes that were taking during this portion

of the discussion are shown below. Common themes expressed during this portion of the discussion included:

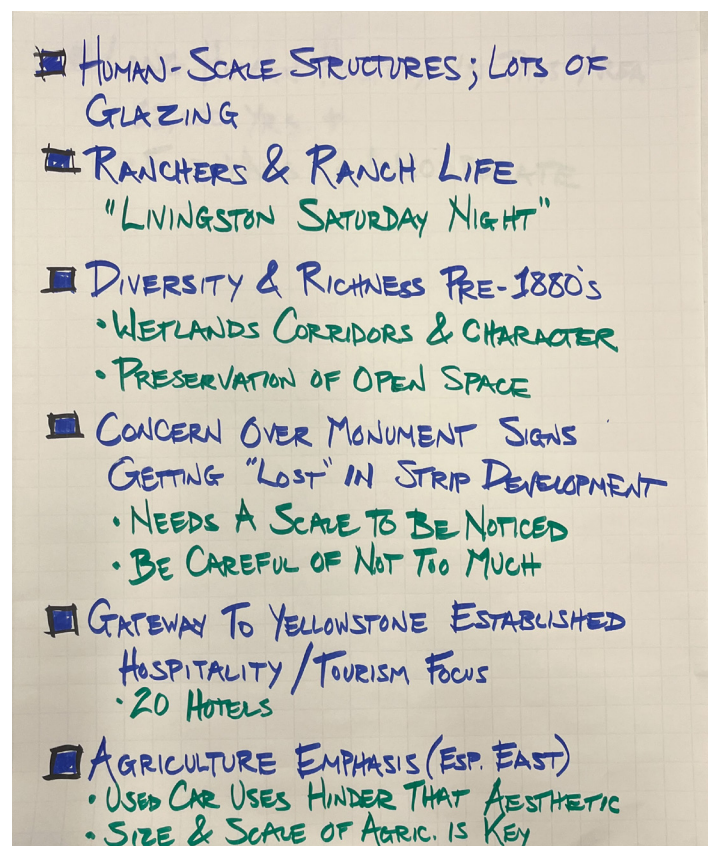
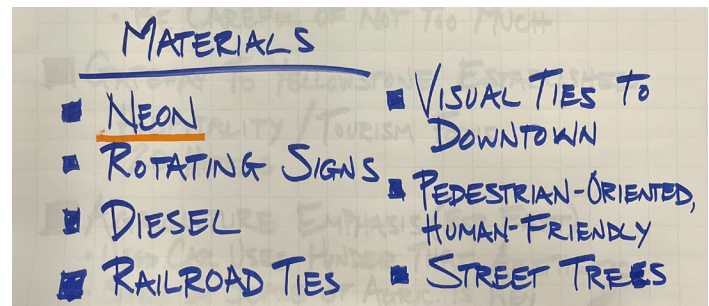
- Despite general support for the appropriateness of Gateway Treatments shown in the visual preference exercise, some question as to whether the best “Gateway Treatment” for Livingston may simply be the vastness of the open space around the City boundaries, before one encounters development, and that perhaps Gateway Treatments should be viewed as the beginnings of development itself;
- A desire to ensure that the character of any Gateway Treatments communicate authenticity rather than



## Large Group Visioning Discussion (Cont.):

- affluence and/or homogeneity;
- The benefit that clear Gateway Treatments could bring to increased visitation of the Downtown;
- A call for any Gateway Treatments to express and acknowledge unique traits of Livingston's identity, such as the railroad, and the long history of human settlement in the area that far predates the establishment of the City of Livingston;
- One community member also pointed out an effort that was undertaken in 2018 to create custom-designed "Welcome to Livingston" gateway signage. That effort was said to have identified 3 locations for the signage, with each location pre-approved by MDT for installation. Each sign was schematically designed, and the character of those signs included the use of boulders and railroad ties to emphasize Livingston's identity. Unfortunately, the signs were never installed, but support was expressed by other workshop participants to see if conversations around those concepts could be revisited.
- As the first topic began to touch on the desired identity of any Gateway Treatments, workshop participants were asked to provide ideas for specific materials or other identity elements that would help ensure that any Gateway Treatments felt authentic to the City of Livingston. Photos of the notes that were taking during this portion of the discussion are shown at right. Common themes expressed during this portion of the discussion included:

- An emphasis on human-scale design elements, both in the overall size of any treatment, and in materiality;
- A desire to emphasize - through materiality - the City's railroad, ranching and agricultural history, the character of the wetlands corridors, and links to Yellowstone National Park and the vibrant Downtown; and
- The need for a balance of visibility and not a dominant appearance.



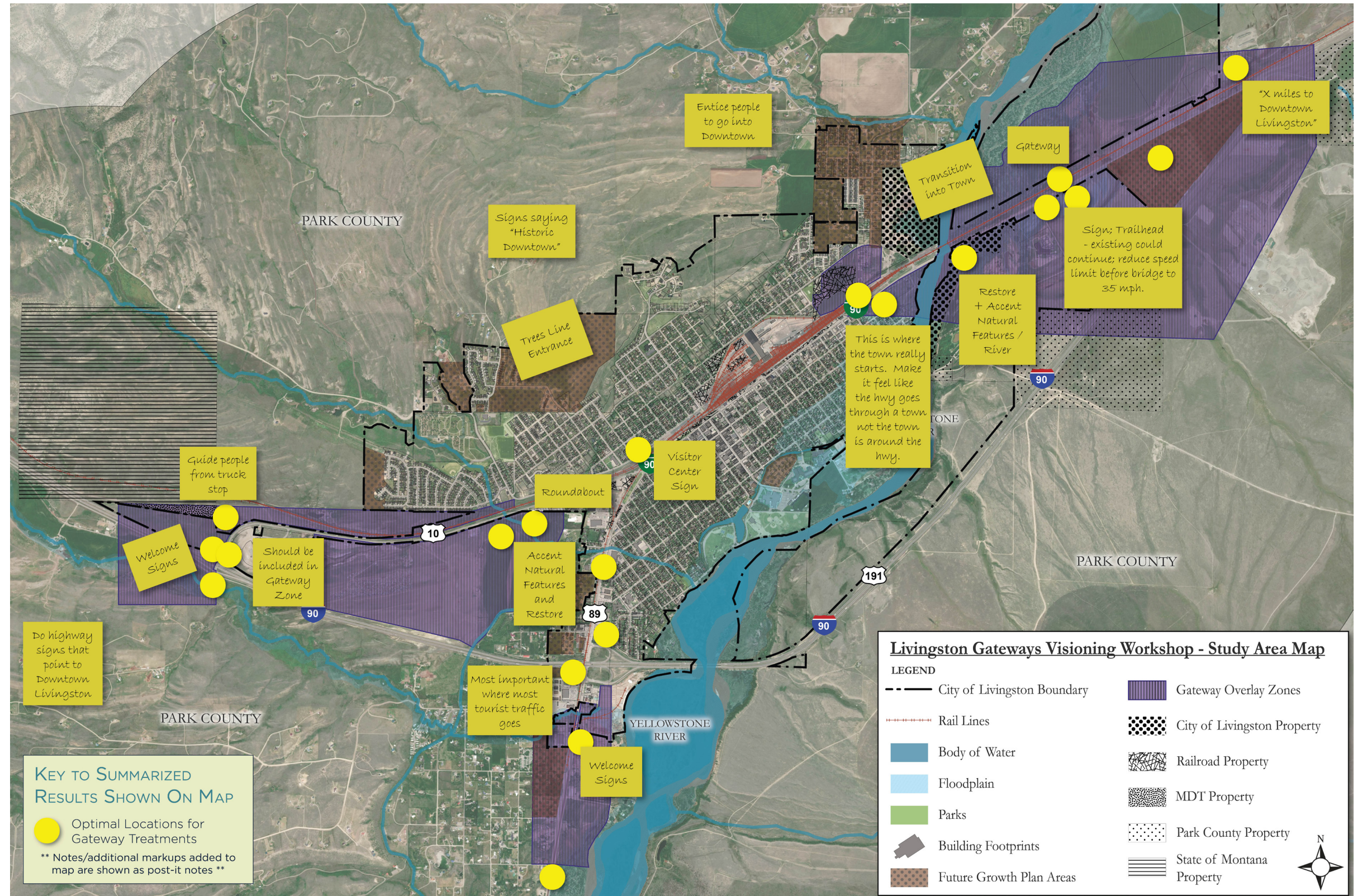
## Small Group Exercises & Highest Priority Desires Expressed By Workshop Participants:

Finally, workshop participants were given an overview of a series of 3 small group, map-based exercises that were to be conducted during the last 45 minutes of the workshop.

Participants were asked to sit at small tables and work with a group of their choosing to complete the 3 exercises. The group sizes varied from four to eight people. While group members worked together to complete each exercise, a pair of consultant team facilitators dropped by each table intermittently to help move conversations along, answer any clarifying questions, and to encourage all participants to actively populate the maps with notes, markups, dots, etc.

The first exercise asked participants to simply identify optimal locations for Gateway Treatments on a large-scale map, showing the full extent of the City of Livingston's boundary, along with Future Growth Plan Areas and Gateway Overlay Zones, as mapped in the Growth Policy. Workshop participants were asked to use a colored dot to identify those locations, and were encouraged to add post-it notes with any specific place-based comments or additional details on their responses.

The map at right shows a consolidated set all of the inputs received from each small group. Highest priority locations expressed tended to be at the I-90 exit to the West, locations where more concentrated development exists when entering the City from the highways, and at the Eastern City Boundary.



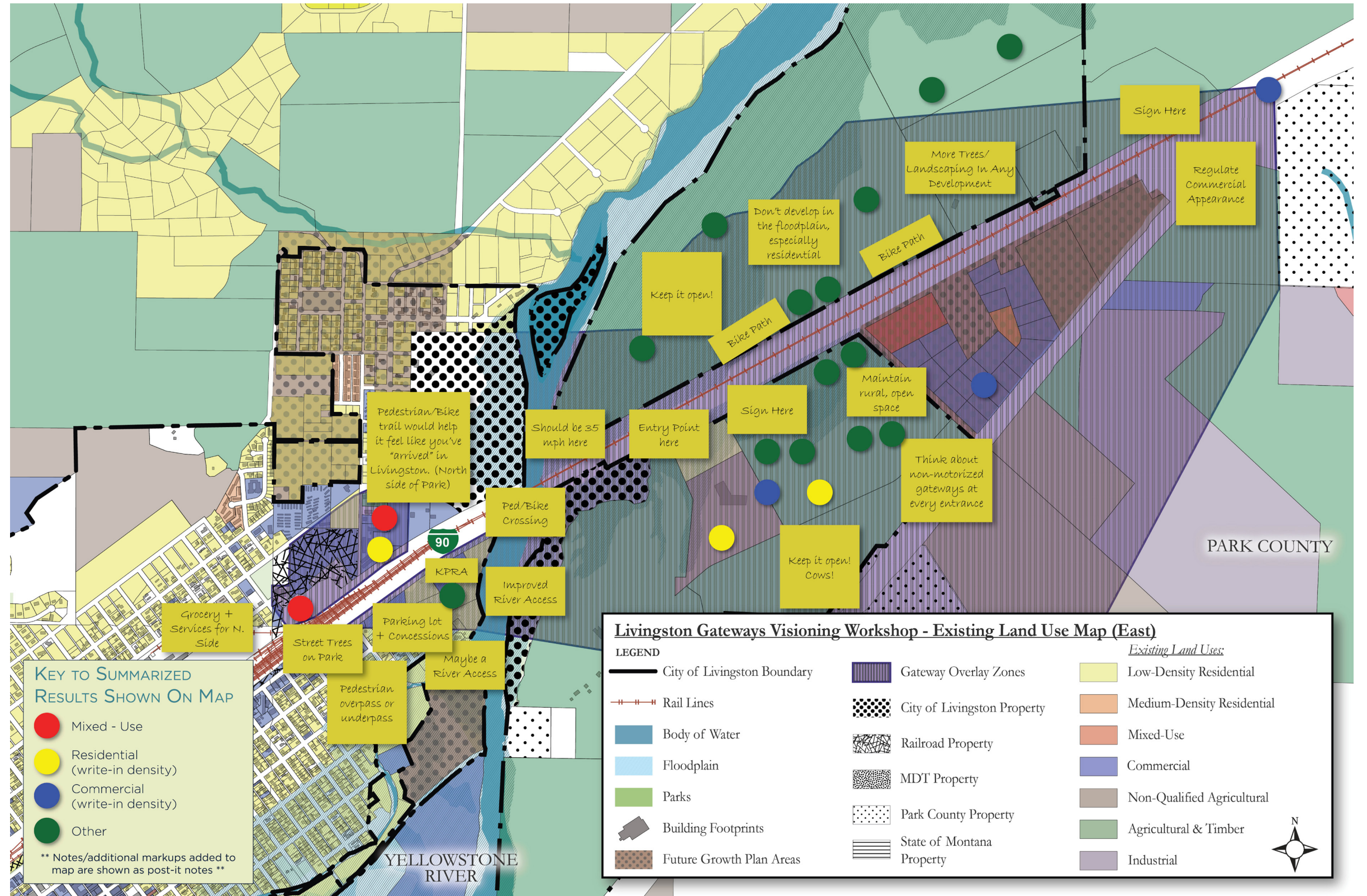
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### Small Group Exercises & Highest Priority Desires Expressed By Workshop Participants:

The second exercise asked participants to discuss and identify desired Land Uses, and/or optimal locations for specific types of Gateway Treatments, using a combination of colored dots and hand-written notes. The base map for this exercise was a map of the Existing Land Uses on the Eastern side of the City. Future Growth Plan Areas and Gateway Overlay Zones, as mapped in the Growth Policy were also shown, as well as City, County, State, and Railroad property ownership, for context.

The map at right shows a consolidated set all of the inputs received from each small group. Detailed information on entry point/signage locations on the Eastern edges of the City were indicated, as well as a strong desire to retain much of the open space/natural character at the edges of the City Boundary, and buffering development around the hospital. More mixed-use development was envisioned as you cross the river, and a desire for commercial development standards Opportunities for non-motorized trail facilities, with better river access as a Gateway Treatment were expressed.

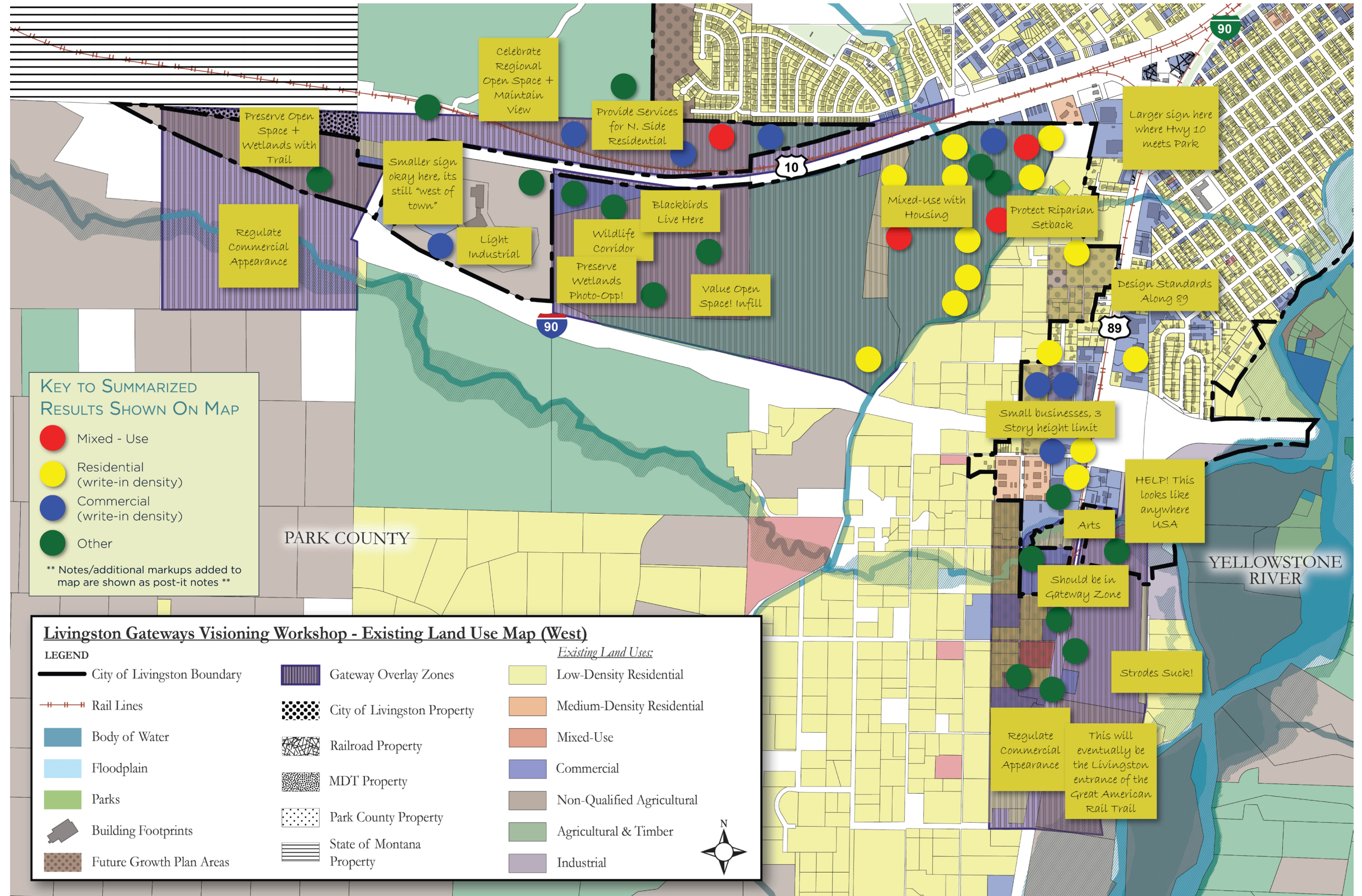


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### Small Group Exercises & Highest Priority Desires Expressed By Workshop Participants:

The third, and final exercise asked participants to continue the discussion and identification of desired Land Uses, and/or optimal locations for specific types of Gateway Treatments, using a combination of colored dots and hand-written notes, but this time, on the Western and Southern sides of the City. The base map for this exercise again included Future Growth Plan Areas and Gateway Overlay Zones, as mapped in the Growth Policy, as well as City, County, State, and Railroad property ownership, for context.

The map at right shows a consolidated set all of the inputs received from each small group. On the South side, strong desire for character defining development and regulation was expressed with a desire for some arts-oriented uses in addition to some lower density commercial and residential. On the West side, participants saw the opportunity to preserve some of the open space/wetlands areas at the City boundaries, while introducing some more mixed-use, neighborhood serving uses, and housing as one moves east along Hwy 10 toward where it meets Park.



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## Recommendations for Potential Implementation Actions:

Based upon the feedback gained from the Gateways Visioning Workshop, combined with a knowledge of best practice approaches to establishing community-oriented Gateway Treatments, the following potential implementation actions are recommended to be further explored by the City of Livingston. They are organized by the three groupings of Gateway Treatment types discussed during the workshop, and each has an indication of a short-medium-long-term timeline in which it could be implemented.

### **Signage, Public Art & Landscaping**

- The City should revisit the work done in 2018 to conceptually design and locate “Welcome to Livingston” monument signage - using a motif of boulders and railroad ties. If MDT support and/or approvals at that time (assuming locations were within state highway ROW) still hold true, this could represent a “quick win” opportunity in implementation.
- If prior local/state support and/or approvals are no longer applicable, it is recommended that the City use the previous design concepts as a “basis of design,” and establish - with input from a small group of stakeholders (i.e. a Task Force) - a palette of additional materials and character-defining features that reflect the identity elements articulated during the workshop.
- A distinction should be made between Citywide Gateway elements and Downtown Gateway elements. While they can share similar aesthetic attributes, they have different intended audiences. Citywide Gateway elements of these types should be prioritized at the Western, Southern, and Eastern boundaries of the City - orienting themselves to highway and/or non-motorized users. The City should specifically explore Citywide Gateway signage at the Southern end of the City to encourage visits by travelers coming from Yellowstone, who may otherwise get right on the interstate and head toward Bozeman, etc.
- The City should explore the viability of additional signage - potentially of a more billboard/advertisement nature - along I-90 to announce the approach to the City of Livingston, and the amenities within the City, with greater prominence.
- The inputs received in this workshop should be incorporated into the Downtown Master Plan - particularly the desire to have additional Gateway Treatments closer to the perceived “entry points” into the Downtown (which will be identified in the Downtown Master Plan). Given greater support for Public Art in the Downtown - proximate locations, those types of Gateway Treatments should be reserved for Downtown Gateway demarcations.
- Landscaping should be incorporated, whenever possible, and should utilize native species, in all Gateway Treatments.
- **Implementation timeline:** Short-Term, if approvals for signage locations and placement are in place/not required Medium-Term, if MDT or railroad approvals, determination of signage locations, property/easement acquisitions are still required.

## Recommendations for Potential Implementation Actions (Cont.):

### Land Use, Building Form & Articulation

- Based upon policy direction in the adopted Growth Policy, and supported by the feedback received in this workshop, the City should assess whether the Building Design Standards in the Chapter 30 Zoning Code requirements (Section 30.46, in particular) should be applicable to the Gateway Overlay Zones identified in the Growth Policy.
  - If they are deemed to be desired, the upcoming Zoning Code Update process should revisit those Building Design Standards to ensure that they are uniquely calibrated to those Gateway contexts - with a particular emphasis in material usage, mass & scale, and building articulation, to be reflective of the existing character of the City of Livingston. A Gateway Overlay Design District should then be mapped - using the Gateway Overlay Zones as guidance - to make those Building Design Standards applicable to new development proposals.
  - If a Gateway Overlay Design District is not established in all Gateway Overlay Zones identified in the Growth Policy, particular priority should go toward establishing one at the Southern edge of the City, as it is the most likely area for infill development potential that could embody a less auto-oriented Gateway character.
  - Given the feedback in this workshop, there was interest in seeing a greater mix of uses at the Western and Southern “entry points” into the City (though not at the City Boundary on the West side).
- The City should use the Zoning Code Update process to explore changes to the Highway Commercial Zone District and/or introduce a new Gateway-oriented Zone District, to encourage less auto-oriented uses, and ones that are more reflective of the existing character and scale of the City of Livingston.
- While the Zoning Code Update process is underway, the City should utilize the existing Building Design Standards in Section 30.46 of the Zoning Code, along with Growth Policy guidance around Gateways, and the inputs received in this workshop, to encourage property owners and developers to modify incoming development proposals to embody these Gateway attributes. Although the Design Standards in the Zoning Code are not mapped to be applicable in these Gateway areas, they can still serve as a helpful tool in helping developers and property owners contribute to the community’s vision in these Gateway areas.
  - **Implementation timeline:** Short-Term, in prioritizing the conversation(s) in the Zoning Code Update process, and working with development applicants in the interim to achieve the existing intent of the Building Design Standards. Medium-Term in implementing the Zoning Code and regulatory changes. Long-Term is seeing corresponding development investments respond to any new regulatory changes.

## Recommendations for Potential Implementation Actions (Cont.):

### Roadway Changes

- Based upon the feedback gained in this workshop, major Roadway/Infrastructure Changes as Gateway Treatments should be minimized, given the magnitude of such an effort, and the long-term nature of implementation - from an approvals, funding, and construction standpoint.
- The City should explore opportunities to incorporate, enhance, or better define non-motorized trail connections adjacent to roadways along the Hwy corridors leading into the Gateway Overlay Areas. These features can then serve as clear Gateway elements into the City, especially when combined with Signage, Public Art, and/or Landscaping. This approach is particularly applicable to the Southern and Eastern edges of the City.
- If a more significant Roadway Change were to be explored, the locations that generated the most interest in this workshop would be near the intersection of Hwy 10 and Park, or near the Southern edge of the City Boundary. Each was discussed as a potential location for a roundabout. Such a significant infrastructure change, would also provide opportunities to incorporate Signage, Public Art, and/or Landscaping, and would also likely call for enhanced Building Design Standards around the intersection to better define and enclose that entry feature into the City.
- **Implementation timeline:** Medium-Term, for enhancements to existing non-motorized trail connections. Long-term for major Roadway/Infrastructure Changes, given the need for a robust design process, corresponding approvals, identification of funds, and construction timeline.