

GATEWAY TO THE PEARL

I usually let my work speak for itself, but this piece needs a little explanation.

My gallery is located in the “Pearl”, an area in the River District of Portland Oregon. In addition to many other land use laws that govern the City of Portland, the central city is governed by “Design Guidelines” which are intended to “...foster the development of high quality and innovative designs” in the downtown area. These guidelines were developed by a group of city planners and citizens with good intentions, and contain many good ideas.

Unfortunately, the guidelines are of necessity generalized and subjective. They are treated as laws and enforced by a handful of city planners who can use (and have used) them to change, delay and/or stop projects for reasons unrelated to the guidelines.

As an example, I have reproduced below the River District Design Guideline A9/A9-1 “Strengthen Gateways – Provide A Distinct Sense of Entry and Exit”. A construction permit for a remodel, addition or new construction would not be issued unless the design met this guideline.

Can you think of a way to make a little red concrete building into a “gateway” using either of the options listed below?

Does my sculpture qualify?

A9-1 PROVIDE A DISTINCT SENSE OF ENTRY AND EXIT



A9 STRENGTHEN GATEWAYS

A9-1 PROVIDE A DISTINCT SENSE OF ENTRY AND EXIT

Background

Key entry points to the Central City and River District should be celebrated with gateway designs that are appropriate and related to significant District characteristics. Gateways should provide a distinct sense of entry and exit and relate to the special qualities of districts and sub-districts. Gateways to and between special areas of the River District should emphasize the special importance and character of these areas. Orienting the building massing towards the street and integrating art or structures at a particular intersection can provide a sense of entry and exit from distinct areas.

Guideline

When developing at gateway locations, provide a distinct sense of entry and exit that relates to the special qualities of an area.

A9-1 PROVIDE A DISTINCT SENSE OF ENTRY AND EXIT

Guideline A9-1 may be accomplished by:

1. Orienting building massing and form towards the intersection of a major district entrance.



The corner entry of the Pinnacle as well as its building massing reinforce its location as a significant entry point into the district.

Guideline A9-1 may be accomplished by:

2. Creating structures or art or using special historic structures to frame a key district or special area entry.



The arches marking the entrance to Laurelhurst, constructed in 1910, serve as a symbolic and physical portal for the neighborhood. The historic truss reconnected between the Wyatt and the Bridgeport Pub and Bakery arches over the street, creating a sense of arrival into the district.

