

PACOIMA

COMMUNITY DESIGN OVERLAY (CDO)

Design Guidelines & Standards

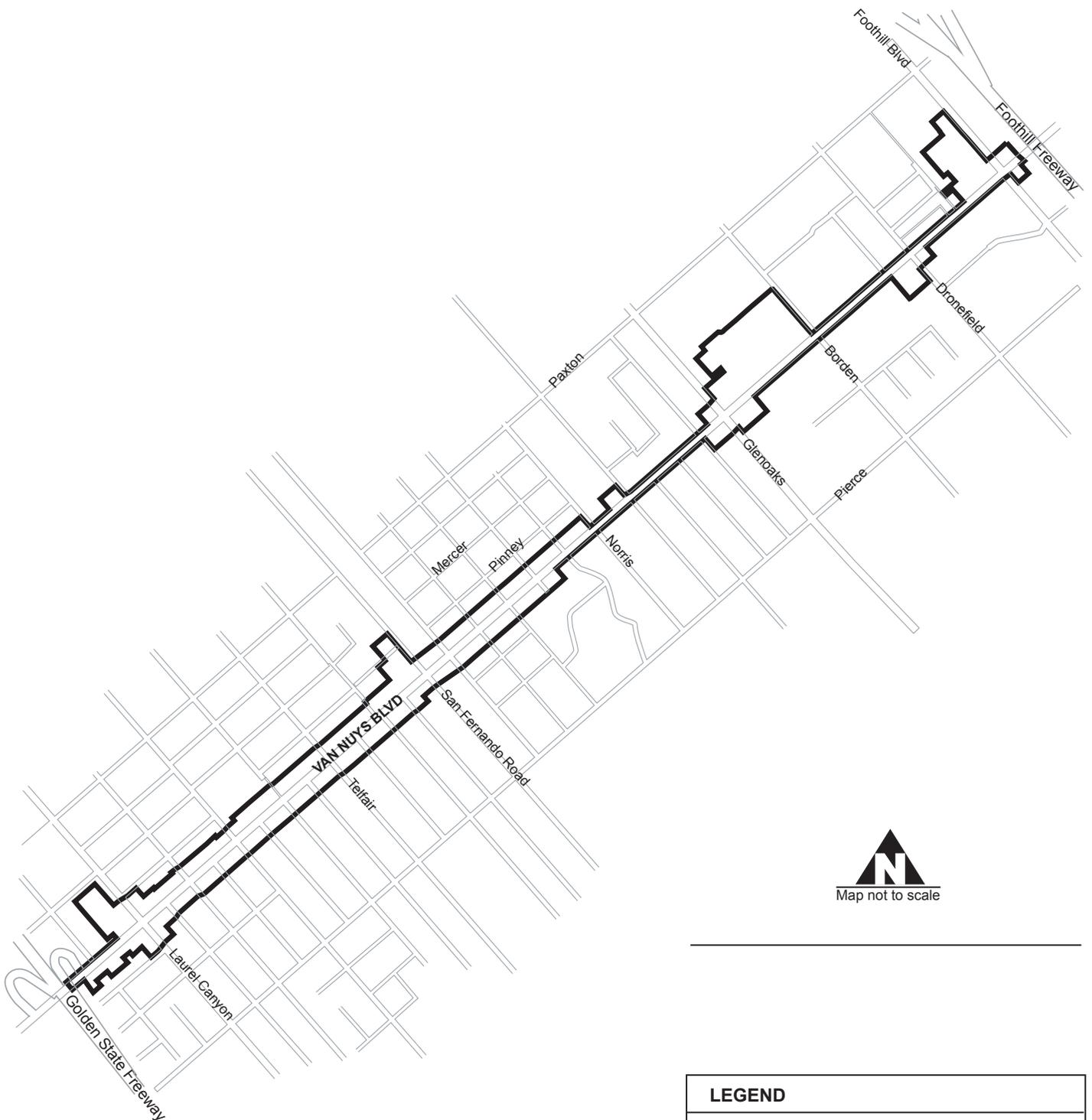
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Pacoima

Community Design Overlay District/ Distrito de Diseño Urbano



LEGEND

-  Proposed Boundaries
-  Community Design Overlay (CDO)

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PACOIMA COMMUNITY DESIGN OVERLAY DISTRICT (CDO)

Section 1. INTRODUCTION, GOALS, AND PRINCIPLES

The Pacoima Community Design Overlay District (CDO) provides Design Guidelines and Standards for both public and private development projects in the Community of Pacoima. The intent of the CDO is to provide guidance and direction in the design of buildings and storefronts that contribute to the appearance of the area.

The Pacoima CDO anticipates the development of a complimentary Streetscape Plan, which includes streetscape design guidelines and standards to provide direction in the design of Projects in public areas. These project could include, street furniture (including benches, bus shelters, and newsstands), street lighting, and landscape. Together these two plans encourage the better use of public and private space and help the community develop ways for ongoing participation in the revitalization and development of Pacoima.

A. Boundaries and Organization

The Pacoima CDO applies to the commercial area in Pacoima on Van Nuys Boulevard between the Golden State (5) Freeway to Foothill Boulevard. This commercial area serves the needs of the Pacoima community. It contains a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Specifically, the CDO has within its area the Pacoima Elementary School, Gonzalez Park, the Pacoima fire station, the Pacoima Library, and the Pacoima Post Office. The black outlined area on the map in Exhibit 1 shows the boundaries for the Pacoima CDO. The Design Guidelines and Standards adopted as part of the Pacoima CDO are requirements for projects in the Pacoima CDO area.

B. Goals

The purpose of the Pacoima CDO is to improve the physical appearance of Van Nuys Boulevard by improving existing projects and to provide guidance for future development. Specifically, the goals of the CDO are:

- To promote design that welcomes pedestrians and helps improve business.
- To encourage site planning standards that compliment surrounding uses.
- To provide guidelines for repairs of storefronts and development that are consistent with the variety of uses in the project area.
- To support the pedestrian experience of Van Nuys Boulevard.

C. Design Principles

The Pacoima CDO guidelines are based upon the following principles.

1. **Consistency:** The Pacoima CDO features a mixture of development types, including shopping centers, mini-malls, offices, gas stations, auto repair, fast food restaurants, pedestrian-oriented commercial, and other related uses. Consistency and compatibility with new design standards can be achieved through the choice of colors, exterior surface materials, architectural styles and features, landscape materials, and the type and appearance of signs, as well as the scale of buildings, their orientation on a lot, and their amount of open space.
2. **Safety:** Public safety is important to the success of portions of Van Nuys Boulevard in Pacoima. Public safety means not only safety from criminal activity, but also addressing planning considerations, such as the location of plazas and other gathering places, parking lots, lighting, signage, bus stops, and landscape to create a place where pedestrian and automobile traffic can safely coexist together. The design and development of Van Nuys Boulevard, including its public open spaces, address concerns over public safety.

Section 2. APPLICATION PACKAGE

The Department of City Planning will review all Projects in the Pacoima Community Design Overlay District for compliance with the Design Guidelines and Standards before the Department of Building and Safety issues a building permit. Below is a definition of "CDO Project," an outline of procedures for submitting an application for review and a list of required submittal materials.

A. CDO Project Definition

The definition of a CDO Project is provided in Chapter 1, Section 13.08 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (L.A.M.C.).

"The CDO applies to the erection, construction, addition to, or exterior structural alterations of any building or structure, including, but not limited to, pole signs and/or monument signs located in a Community Design Overlay District. A project does not include construction that consists solely of:

- (1) Interior remodeling, interior rehabilitation or repair work;*
- (2) Alterations of, including structural repairs, or additions to, any existing building or structure in which the aggregate value of the work, in any one 24-month period, is less than 50 percent of the building or structure's replacement value before the alterations or additions, as determined by the Department of Building and Safety, unless the alterations or additions are to any building facing a public street; or*
- (3) A residential building on a parcel or lot which is developed entirely as a residential use and consists of four or fewer dwelling units, unless expressly provided for in a Community Design Overlay District established pursuant to this section."*

B. Procedures

Upon application for a building permit within the CDO boundaries, the Department of Building and Safety refers applicants to the City Planning Department to determine if the proposal is a project according to the above definition. For simple cases, such as signs, applicants may receive an immediate sign-off. In other cases, however, a staff review may be necessary. Below is a list of necessary application materials for review of a CDO project. A determination by the Planning Department is required 20 days from the date all required materials are submitted and Department of City Planning deems the project complete.

C. Required materials for a CDO Application Package

1. Master Land Use Application
2. Design Overlay Plan Application - A detailed description of the project and a detailed explanation of how the proposed project specifically complies with the relevant CDO Guidelines and Standards.
3. Architectural Plans
 - Vicinity Map with the location of applicant's property.
 - Site/Plot Plan at a minimum 1/8" scale.
 - Elevations (N, S, E, and W) of existing and proposed structures, with all dimensions included.
 - For applicable projects, architectural detail sheet including, but not limited to articulation of main facade elements, windows, doors, balconies, exterior building materials, exterior wall surface treatment, decorative elements, color, roof treatments, pole signs, and monument signs.
 - Landscape plan, if deemed necessary by City Planning staff.
 - Sign plan, if deemed necessary by City Planning staff.
 - Color renderings of the project, if deemed necessary by City Planning staff.
4. Photographs (a minimum of 4" x 6") showing:
 - The Site
 - The Project
 - A panoramic view of all structures within a distance of 200 feet on either side of the subject site.
 - A panoramic view of existing structures on the opposite side of the street within 300 feet of the project site.
5. Environmental Clearance

Section 3. DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

The following Design Guidelines and Standards apply to all projects in the Pacoima CDO.

A. Site Planning

Guideline 1: Entrances into projects should be oriented towards Van Nuys Boulevard.

Standard 1a: The primary entrance into retail and commercial businesses should be from Van Nuys Boulevard.

Standard 1b: Secondary entrances can face a side street or rear parking lot.

Standard 1c: A corner property should have its primary entrance face Van Nuys Boulevard. (See Figure 1.)



Figure 1

Guideline 2: Projects should complement the public right-of-way and streetscape program.

Standard 2a: Design structures to be placed no further than five (5) feet away and no less than 18 inches from the property line on Van Nuys Boulevard.

Standard 2b: Design front yard setbacks to be landscaped areas which enhance the pedestrian experience.

Standard 2c: Design projects to include pocket parks, courtyards, plazas, and landscaping adjacent to sidewalks.

Standard 2d: The design features of projects should incorporate landscaping, colors, and materials.

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Guideline 3: Buffer residential uses adjacent to Van Nuys Boulevard from such negative commercial impacts as loss of privacy, glare, and noise.

Standard 3a: Decorative walls and/or landscaping can be used effectively as buffers.

Standard 3b: Time deliveries to minimize noise and inconvenience to residential areas and pedestrians.

Guideline 4: Design projects' service areas, such as loading and maintenance areas, to minimize impacts on adjacent residential uses and Van Nuys Boulevard.

Standard 4a: When a commercial property is adjacent to or abutting residential uses, buffer loading and maintenance areas with a landscape area at least 3 feet deep in the rear and sides of the property.

Standard 4b: Evergreen hedges with a maximum height of 8 feet are encouraged.

B. Open Space

Guideline 5: Projects should be designed with open space amenities visible and accessible from Van Nuys Boulevard.

Standard 5a: Whenever possible, add courtyards or plazas to commercial properties along Van Nuys Boulevard.

Standard 5b: Outdoor seating, water elements, and landscape areas are encouraged in courtyards or plazas.

C. Utilities

Guideline 6: Promote a visually pleasing streetscape by screening utilities and mechanical equipment from public view.

Standard 6a: Screen existing electrical transformers at the front of a site with landscaping and/or an architectural barriers.

Standard 6b: Install electrical transformers as part of a new project in inconspicuous areas of the site.

Standard 6c: Locate new utility services underground where feasible.

Standard 6d: Screen all mechanical equipment, whether roof-top or at grade, from public view with building materials that blend into the building's design.

D. Parking

Guideline 7: Provide safe and secure parking at the rear of the building.

Standard 7a: Whenever possible, locate parking entrances for mid-block projects at an alley in the rear of the property.

Standard 7b: Clearly mark mid-block parking areas with signage.

Standard 7c: Face lighting inward and downward into parking areas.

Standard 7d: Face lighting away from residential uses.

Standard 7e: Locate flood lighting on the perimeter of parking lots facing inward.

Guideline 8: Incorporate landscape features into parking areas.

Standard 8a: Whenever possible, landscape projects to shade, at maturity, fifty percent (50%) or more of the surface area of a parking lot.

Standard 8b: Maintain all landscaped areas.

E. Pedestrian Amenities

Guideline 9: Provide a safe, attractive environment by using pedestrian amenities, such as walkways, shade, lighting, landscape, and gathering areas.

Standard 9a: Whenever possible, provide pedestrian walkways that feature textured or colored paving materials, landscape features, and lighting. (See Figure 2.)

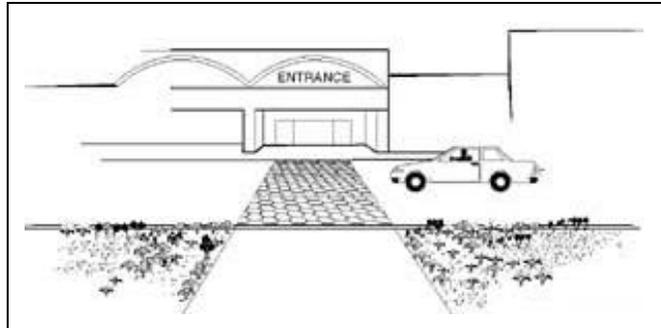


Figure 2

Standard 9b: Include small and/or large awnings, canopies, trees, or a combination to shade at least thirty percent (30%) of the pedestrian walkways.

Standard 9c: Light walkways with path lights.

Standard 9d: Shield lighting to prevent glare on adjacent residential areas.

Standard 9e: Buffer parking lot walkways adjacent to street frontages with a three-foot wide landscape strip.

Guideline 10: Encourage pedestrian movement on Van Nuys Boulevard by avoiding pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.

Standard 10: Whenever possible, place vehicle access in and out of a project from a side street or an alley.

F. Architecture

F.1. Design Consistency

Guideline 11: All components of a project should complement each other.

Standard 11a: Use river rock, common red or earth tone bricks, stone, stucco, wood accents, wood trim for windows and doors, and tile as construction materials.

Standard 11b: Use a maximum of three (3) colors from the designated color palette for building exteriors.

Standard 11c: Design buildings in a shopping center to share at least two (2) exterior complementary colors.

Standard 11d: Paint all vents, gutters, down sprouts, flashing, and electrical conduits to match the color of the surface next to it, unless any of these are being used as a trim or accent element.

F.2. Facade Articulation

Guideline 12: Design ground floor facades and pedestrian spaces to a pedestrian scale.

Standard 12a: Use glass in doors and windows to allow a clear view into stores during business hours.

Standard 12b: Avoid blank exterior walls and large unbroken surfaces.

Standard 12c: Include building bays, recessed entryways, windows and other architectural features in facade design. (See Figure 3.)

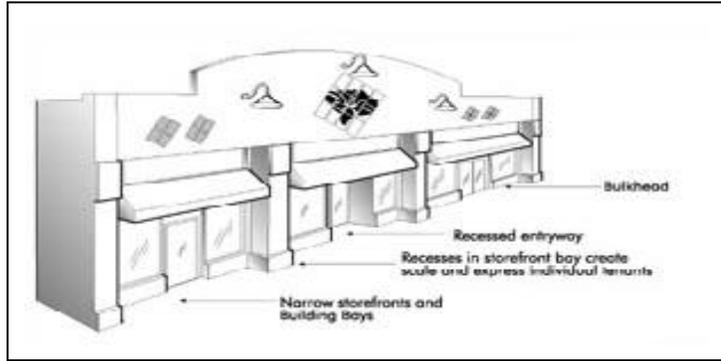


Figure 3

Standard 12d: Use glass elements, including doors and windows, for at least seventy percent (70%) of all first floor commercial frontage.

F.3. Design Variation

Guideline 13: Include architectural breaks, such as balconies, terraces, setbacks, and recessed areas, on any walls longer than 50 feet.

Standard 13a: Design structures with architectural elements, such as trellises, low planters, and lighting.

Standard 13b: Projects higher than two stories should be stepped back. (See Figure 4.)

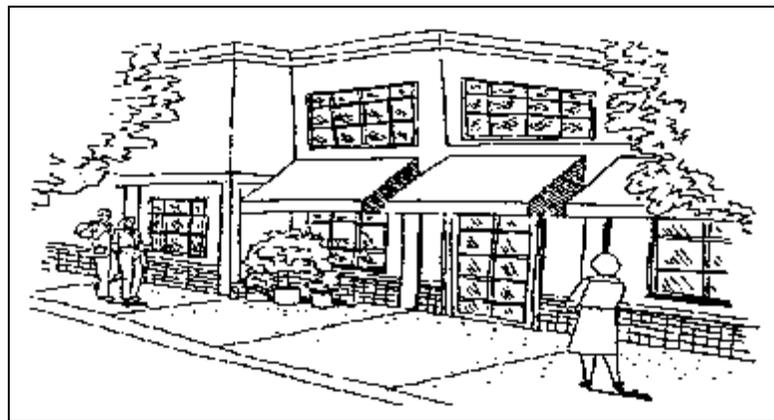


Figure 4

Standard 13c: Discourage flat roofs. (See Figure 5.)



Figure 5

F.4. Fences and Walls

Guideline 14: Fences or walls should maintain a balance between promoting security and pedestrian activity.

Standard 14a: See-through materials, such as decorative block, wrought iron, and/or decorative wood, should be used for fences on properties facing Van Nuys Boulevard.

Standard 14b: Exterior walls should be treated with graffiti resistant surfaces, including specialized coatings and/or evergreen clinging vines.

Standard 14c: Fences or walls facing Van Nuys Boulevard should not be higher than 3 feet 6 inches. (See Figure 6)

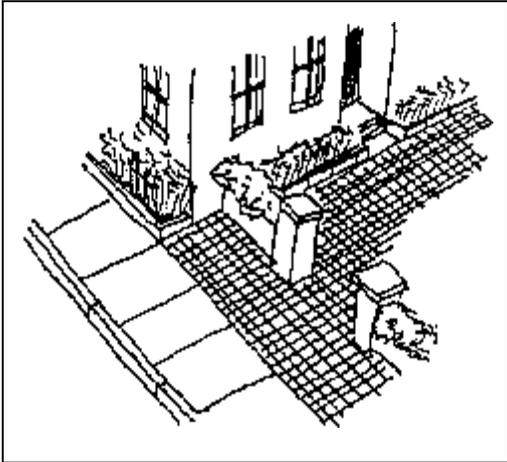


Figure 6

Standard 14d: Side and rear walls can be 6 feet and use solid materials such as stucco and/or decorative wood.

Standard 14e: Maintain all structures and fences in good condition.

Standard 14f: Security devices, such as razor, concertina, or barbed wire, when they are visible from Van Nuys Boulevard or streets crossing Van Nuys Boulevard to the depth of the alley are strongly discouraged.

Standard 14g: Plain concrete block walls, corrugated metal, solid metal, or plywood as fence materials for fencing is strongly discouraged.

Standard 14h: Do not use chain link fences if visible from the street.

F.5. Murals

Guideline 15: Select strategic locations for murals to provide a sense of place for pedestrians, passengers, and drivers of Van Nuys Boulevard.

Standard 15: Locate murals on building walls that are perpendicular to Van Nuys Boulevard and/or at an intersections.

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F.6. Awning & Canopies

Guideline 16: Use awnings, when possible, to create shade and add interesting architectural features to projects.

Standard 16a: Construct awnings of high quality, durable, fade resistant, and fire retardant materials.

F.7. Security

Guideline 17: Security features should maintain a balance between promoting security and the residential quality of life.

Standard 17: Security grills and bars should not be visible during business hours.

Standard 17a: Recess security grills completely into wall pockets when not in use. (See Figure 7.)

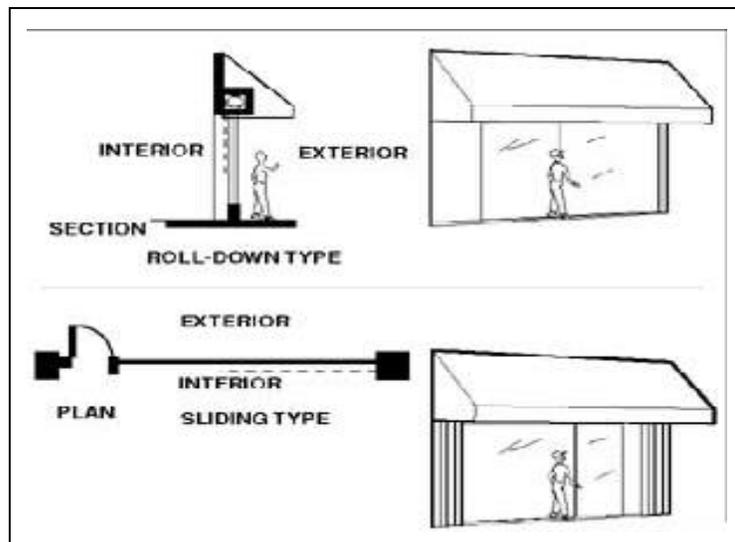


Figure 7

Guideline 18: Lighting should be used to increase a sense of on-site security.

Standard 18a: All exterior lighting fixtures should be compatible with the architectural design of the building.

Standard 18b: Whenever possible, use indirect lighting or “wall washing” and overhead down facing lighting.

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Standard 18c: Do not use intense flood lighting for structures.

Standard 18d: Shield all building lighting to prevent glare into neighboring properties.

F.8. Other Architectural Considerations

Guideline 19: Screen storage, recycling areas, and trash enclosures.

Standard 19: Use a decorative wall and/or a landscaping barrier for recycling areas and trash enclosures.

G. Landscape

Guideline 20: Provide landscaping to screen problem sites from view to complement the architecture of a building, to enhance parking lots, and to soften the transition from a building, parking lot, or vacant lot to the sidewalk.

Standard 20a: Use plant materials to frame views and create inviting spaces within projects.

Standard 20b: Use durable and easy to maintain plant materials in all landscaping.

Standard 20c: Landscape open areas facing the public right-of-way or not covered by a structure, driveway, or walkway. (See Figure 8.)

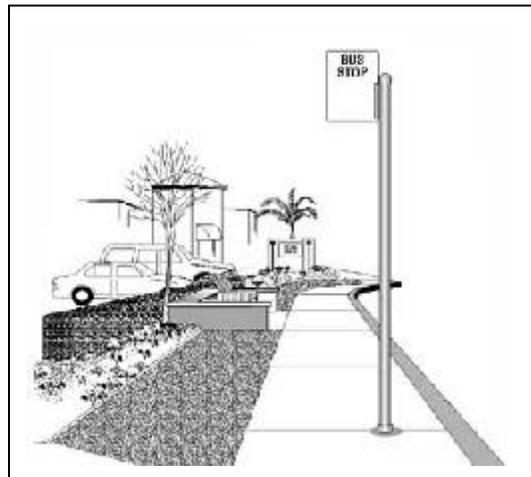


Figure 8

Standard 20d: Irrigate landscape areas with automatic irrigation systems wherever possible.

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- Standard 20e:** Remove dead or hazardous plant materials immediately.
- Standard 20f:** Pruning should maintain the natural form of the tree.
- Standard 20g:** When conditions allow, plant trees 30 feet on center.
- Standard 20i:** Plant ground cover 12 inches on center.
- Standard 20j:** Use a minimum 24-inch box size trees, and 5-gallon shrubs.
- Standard 20k:** Include vine pockets along walls and fences every 3 feet
- Standard 20l:** Where appropriate, install window boxes under shop windows. (See Figure 9.)

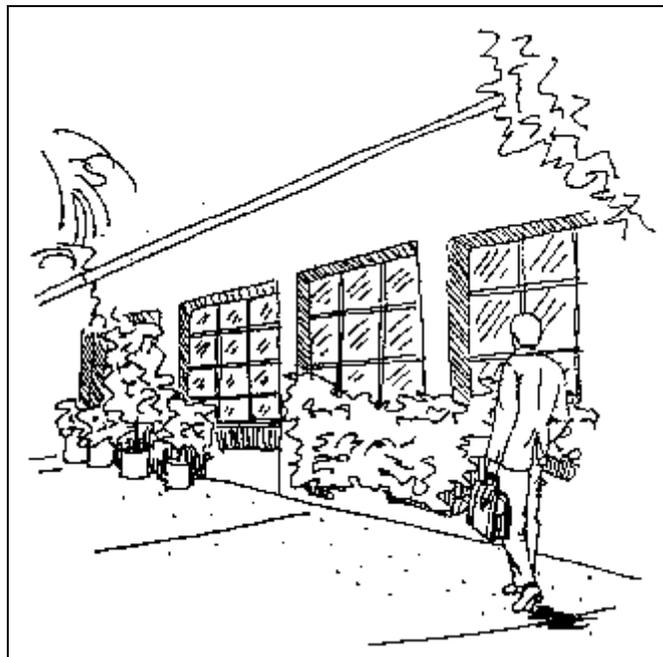


Figure 9

Standard 20m: Where appropriate, install planters. (See Figure 10.)

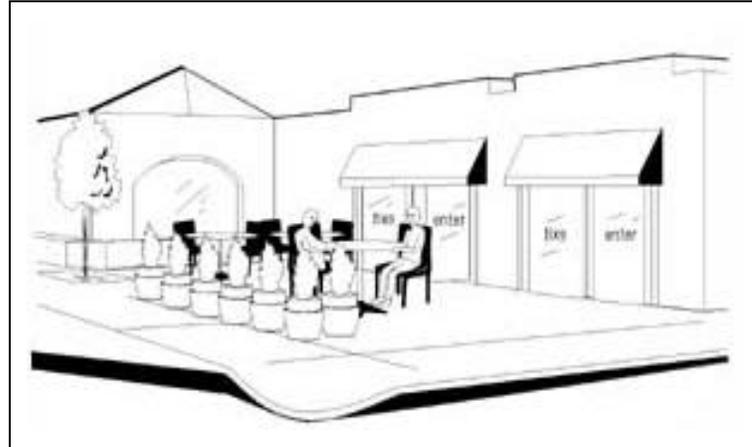


Figure 10

Standard 20n: Use hardscape materials that are durable, easy to maintain, and compatible with the project's architecture.

Standard 20o: Use rock, redwood, bark chips, pebbles, stone, or masonry slabs, as an accent and to enhance an overall landscape plan.

H. Signs.

H.1. General Criteria

Guideline 21: Develop an attractive shopping environment by using appropriate signage.

Standard 21a. Limit sign area to one square foot per one foot of frontage per building face, with a maximum allowance of 15 square feet regardless of front footage.

Standard 21b: Use signs to communicate the types of goods and services being sold. (See Figure 11.)



Figure 11

Standard 21c. Relate the design of signs to a building's architecture.

Standard 21d. Do not cover windows and roof shapes, or dominant trim with signs. (See Figure 12.)



Figure 12

Standard 21e. Use individual channel or back-lit letters, as well as exposed neon.

Standard 21f. Illuminate all major wall signs with either internally or externally exposed neon.

Standard 21g. Locate signs directly above a store entrance.

Guideline 22: Place identification signs for buildings where both pedestrians and persons in vehicles may have a clear view. (See Figure 13.)

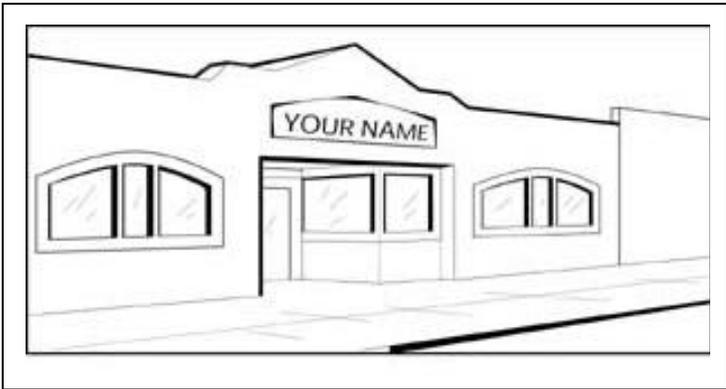


Figure 13

- Standard 22a.** Signage should be placed at the first floor.
- Standard 22b.** Use only one building identification sign per business.
- Standard 22c.** One additional sign may be allocated to businesses that have a second frontage, or for businesses that front two streets or public ways, such as an alley or side street.

Guideline 23: Projects containing more than one storefront should have an overall planned, coordinated sign program to be submitted for approval as part of the sign project.

- Standard 23a.** Design signs in a multiple tenant site to be consistent with each other in height, size, shape, color, and illumination.
- Standard 23b.** Locate signs in designated sign bands determined by existing architectural features or designated by the building design. (See Figure 14.)



Figure 14

- Standard 23c** When the ground floor footage of a building is occupied by more than one tenant, each tenant is entitled to a maximum of 15 square feet of commercial signage regardless of each tenant's front footage.
- Standard 23d.** Letters should not exceed a height of sixteen (16) inches.

H.2. Wall Signage

Guideline 24: Use wall signs to reinforce the rhythm, scale, and consistency of the storefront facade.

Standard 24a. Place wall signs on a building's surface where a sign band area is immediately above an awning or window area to avoid obstructing architectural elements. (See Figure 15.)

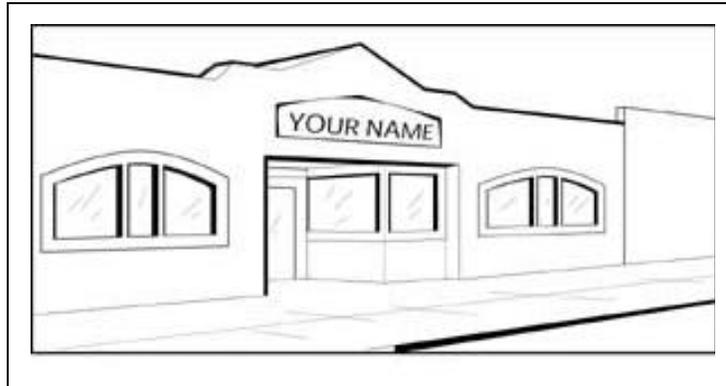


Figure 15

Standard 24b. Align wall signs with similar adjacent signs on the same building. (See Figure 16.)



Figure 16

Standard 24c. Wall signs may project no more than twelve (12) inches from the wall.

Guideline 25: Logos may be used if they are tastefully executed and do not repeat the business name.

Standard 25. Logos should be proportionate to the size of a sign's letters but not to exceed sixteen (16) inches in height or width.

H.3. Window Signage

Guideline 26: Design storefront window signs to permit views into and out of the shop.

Standard 26. Signs should not cover more than thirty percent (30%) of a window.

H.4. Awning Signage

Guideline 27: When awnings are used, signs should be integrated into their design. (See Figure 17.)



Figure 17

Standard 27a. Place commercial identification on awning valences or horizontal runners.

Standard 27b. Awning sign letters should be no more than seven (7) inches high.

Standard 27c. Awning valance signage may have only one of the following: telephone number, address, or services/product offered.

Standard 27d. No temporary signs may be placed on the valance of an awning.

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H.5. Monument Signs

Guideline 28: Use monument signs instead of proposed pole signs.

- Standard 28a.** The maximum size for a double-sided monument sign should be no more than 4 feet high by 6 feet wide, with a maximum size of 48 square feet.
- Standard 28b.** For multiple tenant buildings, the maximum surface area for an individual tenant's sign should be 6 square feet on each side of a monument sign.
- Standard 28c.** The maximum height of letters on a monument sign should be nine (9) inches.
- Standard 28d.** Relate the construction materials and colors of the monument sign to the style, design, materials, and colors of adjacent structures.
- Standard 28e.** If monuments signs are illuminated, glare must be carefully controlled and lighting sources concealed.

H.6. Street Address Numbers

Guideline 29: Use large numbers to clearly identify an address.

- Standard 29:** Street address numbers may be between eight (8) to ten (10) inches in height.

H.7. Temporary Signage

Guideline 30: No more than two (2) temporary signs, totaling six (6) square feet, should be located on each business.

- Standard 30a:** Use vinyl sign materials.
- Standard 30b:** Do not use paper signs, such as hand-painted "Sale" signs,
- Standard 30c:** Do not place signs in windows.
- Standard 30d:** Post non-holiday temporary signs and banners no more than ten (10) days before an event and ten (10) days after the event is over.
- Standard 35e:** Post holiday signs or decorations no more than thirty (30) days preceding the holiday and remove them within ten (10) days following the holiday.

Section 4. DEFINITIONS

Many words and phrases used in this document are defined in this section. Some words and phrases not defined below may be found in Section 12.03 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC).

- A. Articulation:** Clear and distinct internal separation among vertical design elements through colors, textures, and architectural features.
- B. Awning:** A roof-like cover extending over or in front of a door or window as a shelter or decorative element.
- C. Canopy:** A projecting horizontal architectural element of a building having the form of a flat band.
- D. Decorative Wall:** Brick, masonry block, stone, or concrete walls incorporating surface treatments for design relief (e.g. split-face, slump, scored, exposed aggregate, stamped, color variety). The wall should include a top cap, and both sides of the wall must have an artistic treatment.
- E. Earthtone:** A color that naturally occurs, in particular browns, beiges, dark blues, or dark greens.
- F. Facade:** The front of a building or any of its sides facing a public way or space. It may also be any other face -- as on the street or court -- of a building given special architectural treatment.
- G. Flashing:** Sheet metal or similar materials used to cover and protect certain joints and angles in a building, such as where a roof comes in contact with a wall.
- H. Ground Floor:** The lowest level within a building which is accessible to the street, the floor level of which is within three feet above or below curb level.
- I. Hardscape** - On site open space areas consisting of concrete, tile and/or brick pavers, walls, fences trellises, stones, rocks, outdoor furniture (e.g. trash cans, and benches), and amenities, such as water features and artwork.
- J. Human or Pedestrian Scale:** The apparent size or bulk of a building as it relates to the size of the human body.
- K. Landscape:** The design and organization of landforms, hardscape, and softscape including groupings of trees, shrubs, groundcovers, vines, pathways, and arbors.
- L. Mural:** Artwork applied to and made integral with the wall, the written message of which does not exceed three percent of the total area of the sign.

- M. Project:** See Section 3.A. above.
- N. Service Area:** Any location containing open storage, loading docks, non-public entrances, trash and/or recycling receptacles, or other utility uses.
- O. Signage:** An architectural feature whose overall size, materials, and design provides identification for businesses or buildings. It can includes words, numbers, symbols, and logos. Various types of signage includes:
1. **Window Signage** - A sign that is painted, posted, or displayed on an exterior translucent or transparent surface, including windows and doors.
 2. **Projecting Signage** - A sign, other than a wall sign, that is attached to a building and projects outward therefrom with one or more sign faces approximately perpendicular to the face of the building.
 3. **Awning Signage** - A sign that is painted, sewn, or screened, onto the exterior surface of an awning.
- P. Shopping Center:** A group of retail and other commercial establishments that is planned, owned, and managed as a single property. On-site parking is provided
- Q. Softscape:** Plant materials, such as shrubs, trees, ground cover, lawn, planter boxes, or flowers.
- R. Walkways:** A private at-grade pedestrian accessway connecting buildings structures, parcels, and blocks.

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