

## 1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of these design guidelines is to assure quality design of developments within the city that promote the health, safety and general welfare of the community by maintaining and enhancing the man-made environment. The guidelines contained in this document are tools to be used by developers during the project design phase and by City decision-makers during the development review process.

It is the goal of these design guidelines to encourage creative architectural and site planning solutions consistent with the overall context of surrounding commercial, industrial and residential developments.

### A. GOALS

The design guidelines have been established to ensure the following:

1. Establish quality development that focuses on community design principles that result in creative and imaginative solutions.
2. Orderly and harmonious appearance of structures along with associated facilities such as signs, landscaping, parking areas, refuse storage areas, etc.
3. Prevention of incompatible design and development types.
4. Incorporation of architectural design quality and details on all sides of a structure. (360-degree architecture).
5. Maintenance of the public health, safety and general welfare.
6. Implementation of the General Plan policies which encourage the preservation and enhancement of the particular character and unique assets of the City.
7. Elimination of visual blight.

## 2.0 APPLICABILITY

The Design Guidelines should be used as a starting point for the creative design process. Property owners and developers are encouraged to involve Planning Division staff prior to initiating any new construction or remodel of commercial, industrial or multiple family residential properties.

The design of a project is evaluated under two different documents: Title 17 of the Westminster Municipal Code (WMC) and the Design Guidelines Manual. The WMC includes development and design standards that are mandatory and required under the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. Design standards typically employ the word “shall.”

The Design Guidelines are a separate document, adopted by resolution, and are intended to supplement the development requirements and regulations contained in the WMC. Both the design standards in the Zoning Ordinance and the Design Guidelines



in this document are intended to be implemented in conjunction with the development review procedures contained in Chapter 17.52 of the WMC.

Design Guidelines are flexible, not mandatory, but reflect recommended or desirable design solutions recommended for commercial and industrial developments, and residential developments comprised of two or more units, either detached or attached, within the R2 through R5 zones. The guidelines also apply to single-family detached units that are constructed in the R2 through R5 zones. The design guidelines do not apply to the construction or modification of single-family residences in a single-family tract that are not in the R2 through R5 zone districts. Guidelines typically employ the words “should” or “encourage.”

Additionally, this document provides design recommendations for two areas of special interest to the City: the Civic Center District adjacent to Beach Boulevard and Westminster Boulevard and the Little Saigon Community Planning Area (CPA) along Bolsa Avenue. While specific architectural style guidelines are identified for each area, they are suggestive in nature and should be used as a starting point for the design of new development or the remodeling of existing structures in Little Saigon or the Civic Center District. Alternative architectural styles that complement the styles identified in this document may also be considered by the Planning Division.

Projects are not expected to meet the exact letter of every design guideline to be considered in reasonable compliance with the overall intent of the guidelines, but should make every attempt to do so.

During the review of development proposals by Planning Division staff, each submittal will be evaluated to ascertain whether or not the mandatory zoning standards have been followed and to determine if the intent of the design guidelines have been reasonably complied with. Although projects will be assessed for their compliance with the guidelines identified in this document, alternative design methods are acceptable if found to result in an equal or better design solution.

The provisions found within these guidelines shall serve as the basis for the project approval findings found in Chapter 17 of the WMC, pertaining to design. It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that the design of a project complies with the intent of the guidelines.

Developments in compliance with the standards in the WMC and the design guidelines herein will receive favorable comment and recommendation of approval.

Every effort has been made to eliminate disagreements and discrepancies between the design standards and other land use regulations, but where such disagreements or discrepancies exist, the stricter requirement shall apply.