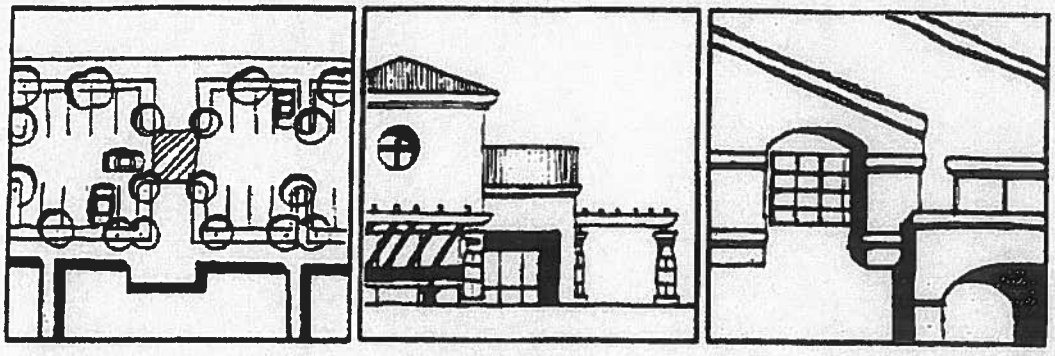


CITY OF
AGOURA HILLS

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

Department of Planning and Community Development

CITY OF AGOURA HILLS,
CALIFORNIA

Table of Contents

---

[1] Revisions adopted on April 13, 2011 per Resolution No. 11-1625.
[2] Revisions adopted on May 11, 2005 per Ordinance No. 05-330.
[3] Revisions adopted on November 12, 2003 per Resolution 03-1302.
[4] Revisions adopted on October 12, 2011 per Resolution No. 11-1651.
[5] Revisions adopted on January 14, 2009 per Resolution No. 09-1513.
[6] Revisions adopted on January 14, 2009 per Resolution No. 09-1513.
[7] Revisions adopted on July 9, 2014 per Resolution No. 14-1760.
[8] Revisions adopted on July 9, 2014 per Resolution No. 14-1760.

I. Statement of Intention

Incorporated in 1982, the City of Agoura Hills is committed to excellence in architecture, planning and landscape architecture. Through these design guidelines, the City of Agoura Hills seeks to harmonize the disparate design themes developed in the area prior to the City's incorporation.

While specific architectural styles are not dictated by the City and creative design is encouraged, architects and landscape architects are expected to incorporate into their designs the following:

Harmony with the natural landforms and native vegetation;

Response to the desert climate (through proper building orientation, appropriate glazing, use of overhangs, shading devices, pergolas etc.); and

Reflection of the highest standards of adjacent buildings and the neighborhood (the style (s), proportions, colors and materials).

The general intent of this document is to establish Standards and Guidelines to assist applicants in the architectural design, planning, and landscape design of projects and developments within the City of Agoura Hills.

The specific goals are to encourage beauty, integrity in function, proportion, form and use of materials in architectural design. Further, the goal is to harmonize development with the natural environment around it.

Architects, planners, landscape architects and developers are encouraged to display their design creativity within the Standards & Guidelines while remaining sensitive to the desires of the community as embodied in the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and other applicable regulations.

It is not the intent of the City's Architectural Review Panel[1] and these Standards & Guidelines to dictate the design of projects, but rather to act in an advisory capacity to insure that new development is a positive addition to the scenic and historic beauty of the City of Agoura Hills.

[1] The Architectural Review Board was replaced with the Architectural Review Panel.

A. Underlying Goals of the Standards & Guidelines

1. The City of Agoura Hills is noted for the beauty of its existing hillside areas. Underlying all the recommendations of these Standards & Guidelines is the principle that all new constructions in the city shall be designed to preserve the character of the existing landforms by integrating the existing terrain and native landscape resources as part of the overall site plan design.

2. Oak trees and other existing significant trees shall also be incorporated into the site plan to the maximum extent possible.

B. Preparation of Guidelines and Updates

The Architectural Design Standards and Guidelines were initially prepared by an ad hoc committee consisting of representation of the City Council, Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board and Planning staff. The draft was reviewed and adopted by the City Council on November 4, 1992.

A number of amendments were approved subsequent to the initial adoption as follows:

- Revisions pertaining to lighting were adopted on November 12, 2003, per Resolution 03-1302;
- Revisions pertaining to signage were adopted on May 11, 2005, per Ordinance No. 05-330;
- Revisions pertaining to neighborhood compatibility and Old Agoura were adopted on January 14, 2009, per Resolution No. 09-1513;
- Revisions pertaining to parking lot landscaping were adopted on April 13, 2011, per Resolution No. 11-1625; and
- Revisions pertaining to pedestrian amenities and connectivity were adopted on October 12, 2011, per Resolution No. 11-1651.

II. Site Design

A. Open Space/Natural Environment

1. Design must respect the landscape characteristics of the existing terrain and maximize preservation of open space. Furthermore, to the greatest extent possible, the existing terrain must be incorporated into the site plan design. (See Figure 1 & 2).

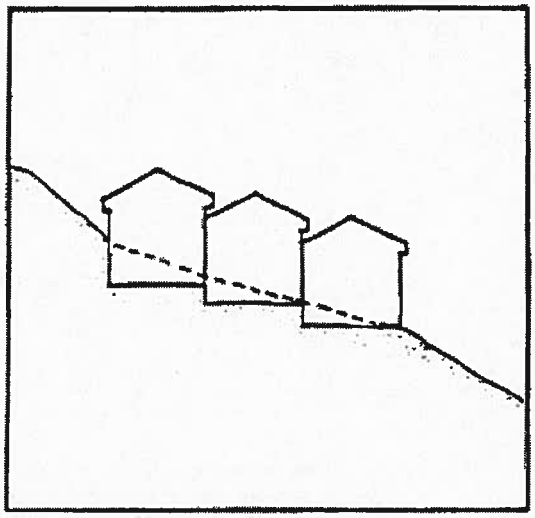


Figure 1. Site building into hillsides to incorporate them (blend-in) visually into existing hillside. Place buildings below ridge line in order to preserve natural setting.

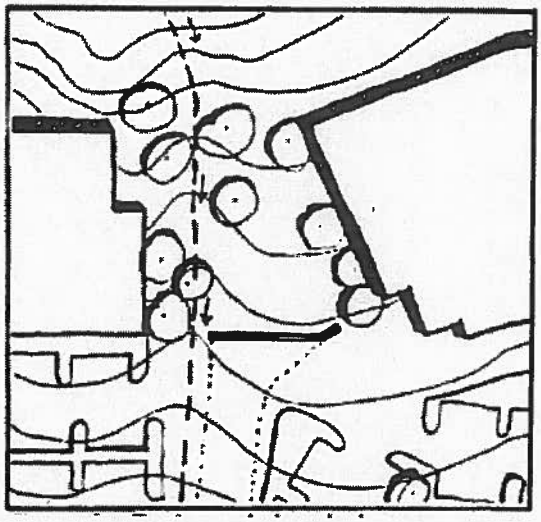


Figure 2. Design existing drainage courses into riparian areas which become a part of the landscape plan.

2. Preserve lines of sight from public area to the existing open spaces and hillside areas.

3. Design the site so that open space and landscaped areas visually blend and/or with that of adjacent properties to maximize the visual expanse of open space. (See Figure 3 & 4).

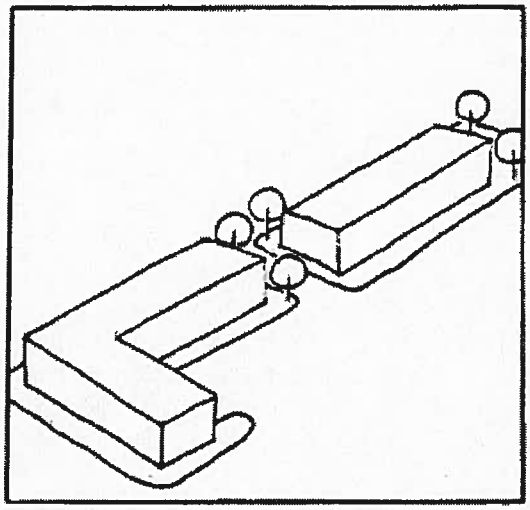


Figure 3. (YES)

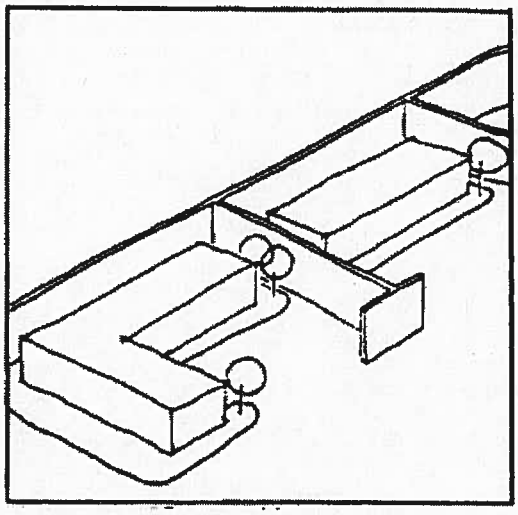


Figure 4. (NO)
Avoid unnecessary perimeter walls or physical property boundaries which would create the appearance of unrelated separate areas.

B. Sight line Preservation/Setbacks/Building Separations

1. When appropriate, the largest possible front setbacks are encouraged to avoid the appearance of "looming" buildings from streets and public areas. Minimum required setbacks are to be considered as a starting point. Setbacks may need to be increased to insure compatibility with surrounding land uses, topography, oak tree protection, view preservation, natural lighting and ventilation, etc. Varied front setbacks are encouraged. (See Figure 5).

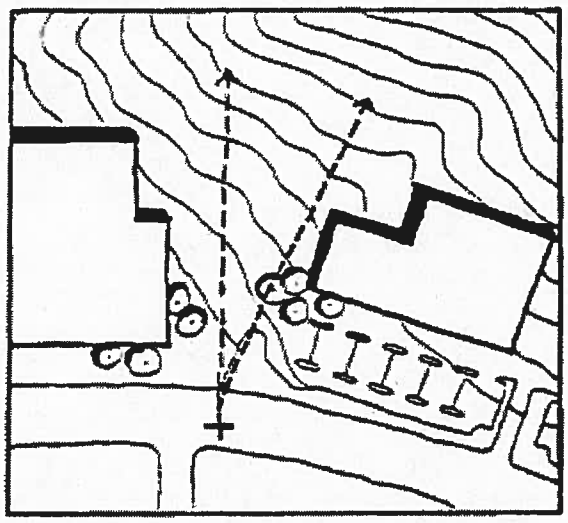


Figure 5.

2. Projects should be good visual neighbors to one another. A building's design should be harmonious in its style with the architectural style of surrounding existing and planned developments. (See Figures 6A & 6B).

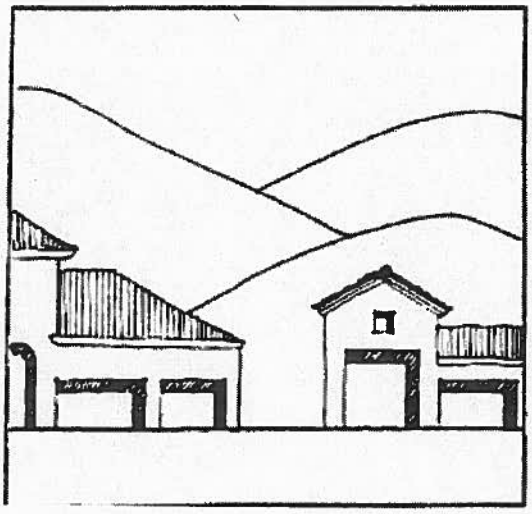


Figure 6A. (YES)

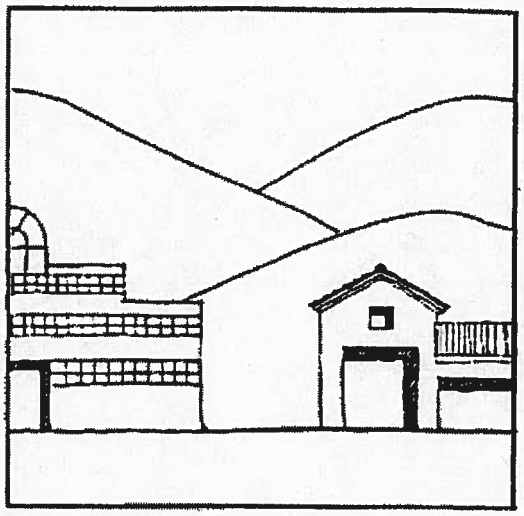


Figure 6B. (NO)

3. In designing transitions from one project to the next, the following should be considered:

   a. Selective landscaping patterns which visually ties one project to the next.

   b. Introduction of unifying design elements throughout the development to assure and reflect an integral design treatment with adjacent properties, including harmonious roof treatments, colors, walkways, driveway, signage, etc.

4. All development proposals should demonstrate coordination of the site planning, arrangement of building forms, landscape design and façade patterns with neighboring properties.

C. Grading

1. Grading should be kept to a minimum except to the extent necessary to integrate the building into the land, improve on surface drainage, protect oak trees and provide adequate access. If increased grading would enable greater sculpturing of a building into existing terrain, and thus reduce its visual impact, such design is encouraged within the restrictions of the Grading Ordinance of the Municipal Code.

2. The shape and form of contouring should simulate natural landforms, free-flowing, meandering and curved rather than angular geometric forms "Land Form Grading" techniques shall be used. Information on "Land Form Grading" technique is available at the Planning Department. (See Figure 7A &7B).

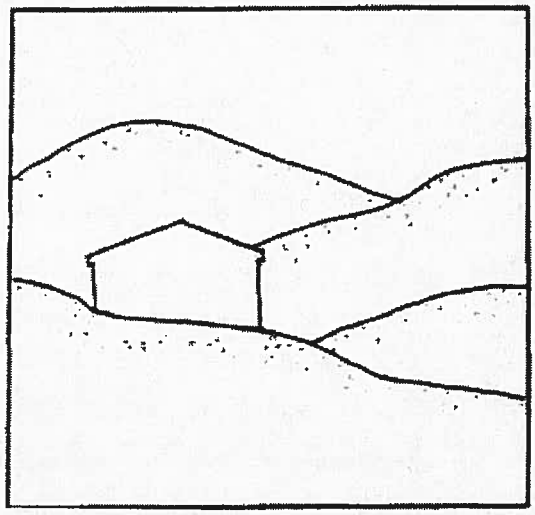


Figure 7A. (YES)

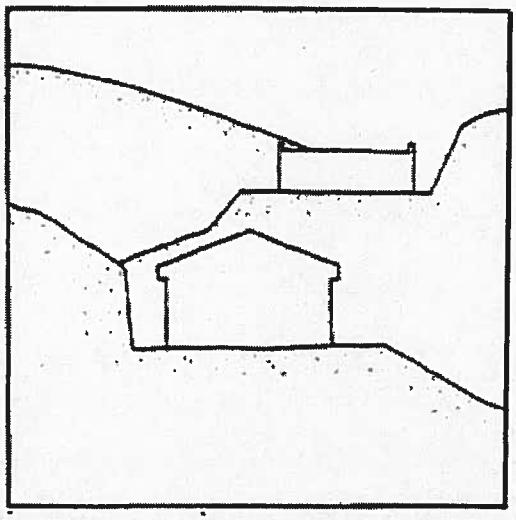


Figure 7B. (NO)

3. Concrete lined terrace and down drains are discouraged. Instead natural materials such as riprap shall be used.

D. Parking/Site Circulation/Site Access

1. General Parking Requirements

a. All commercial parking areas shall be designed in accordance with the Section 9654, OFF STREET PARKING of the City of Agoura Hills Zoning Ordinance, unless otherwise stated in this document.

b. All off-street parking facilities, including access aisles, driveways, loading areas and manufacturing areas shall be surfaced with a hard and impervious material. All off-street parking facilities shall be suitably sloped, drained, and shall be adequately designed and engineered for the traffic and the parking load expected.

c. Shared parking between adjacent properties shall be regulated per the requirements of the Municipal Code Section 9654.2.K.

d. If future expansion is expected, space must be reserved for future parking.

e. With the intent of encouraging automobile trip reduction, provide for bicycle racks, preferential parking spaces for car pool parking, and designated parking spaces for motorcycle parking.

f. Underground parking may be permitted to improve site design, but cannot be used to increase density.

2. Parking Area Design

a. Parking areas should be separated from buildings by either a raised concrete walkway or landscaped strip, preferable both. Situations where parking spaces directly abut the buildings should be avoided.

b. The parking area should be designed to allow links from the building to the major on site parking areas and street sidewalks as an extension of the pedestrian circulation system within the project. This will also allow handicapped access from the street to

the building. This can be accomplished by using design features such as ramps, walkways with enhanced paving, plazas, arcades, courtyards, pathways, trellis structures, and/or special landscape treatments. Pedestrian access between sites is encouraged. Applicant shall incorporate all Title 24 and ADA (handicap access) requirements when designing said access. (See Figure 8A & 8B).

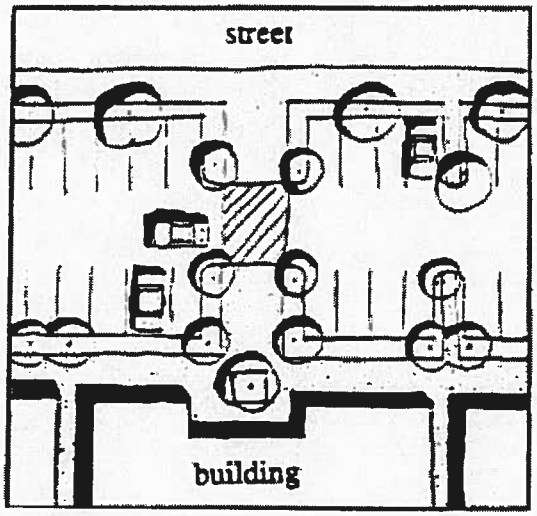


Figure 8A.

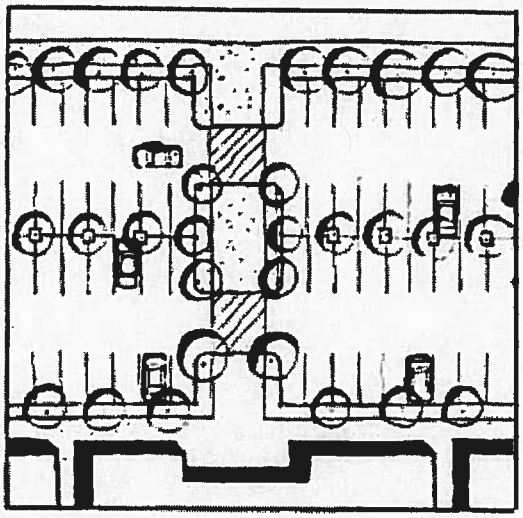


Figure 8B.

c. Parking areas, both interior and perimeter, shall be landscaped. The Zoning Ordinance requires 50% shade cover at 15 years maturity.

Exception: In the case of retail centers, the landscape shade coverage of the parking area may be reduced up to 20% provided that the parking area is enhanced with pedestrian amenities to offset the reduction of the tree canopy coverage. The amenities shall include carports, shade structures, arbors, trellis covers, enhanced pavement, public sitting areas, a combination of raised landscape planter, fountains, artwork, benches and other amenities of similar intent approved by the City. A credit of one hundred percent of the coverage provided by the shade structure shall be counted toward the requirement, and a credit of fifty percent for other types of amenities. [2]

d. In order to reduce the visibility of automobiles from the public right of way a combination of earthen beams, landscaping material and, when necessary, 42" high solid opaque walls should be utilized.

[2] Revisions adopted on April 13, 2011 per Resolution No. 11-1625.

e. The proposed project shall accommodate individuals with physical disabilities, via the provision of handicapped parking stalls, ramps, access, walks, etc., per federal, state and local requirements.

f. Off-street parking facilities shall be designed so that a car within a facility will not have to enter a street to move from one location to another location within the same parking facility.

g. Integrated wheel stops shall be provided at planting areas or tree wells. Sidewalks and/or planting areas shall be a minimum of 6 feet wide when parking abuts on one side, or 8 feet wide when parking abuts on two sides. (See Figure 9).

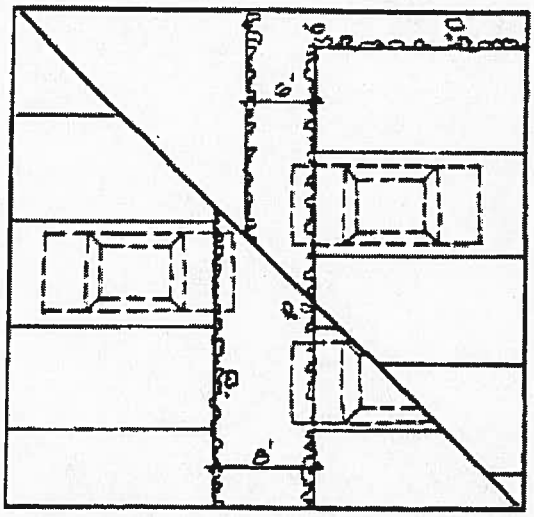


Figure 9.

h. Parking areas which accommodate a significant number of vehicles should be divided into a series of connected smaller lots. Landscaping and offsetting portions of the lot are effective in reducing the visual impact of a large amount of parking.

i. Two-way driveways shall be at least 26 feet wide, and when lots contain over 100 cars, preferably 30 feet wide minimum, so that an entering vehicle does not interfere with an exiting vehicle. (Narrowed driveways lead to conflict between entering and exiting vehicles, causing one to stop and wait for the other.)

j. To provide adequate driveway throat, the first parking stall which is perpendicular to a driveway, or first aisle juncture, should be at least 30 feet back from the property line for a lot containing less them 50 parking spaces and 40 feet minimum or per the requirements set by the City's Public Works Department for a lot with 50 parking spaces or more. This recommendation is to provide an off street queuing area so that if a vehicle is parking at or leaving the stall nearest the street, there is room for at least one vehicle to queue while waiting for the other vehicle to maneuver.

Without this provision, vehicles will queue into the street. Additional depth of driveway throat may be required based on volume of outbound traffic per City Traffic Engineer review. (See Figure 10).

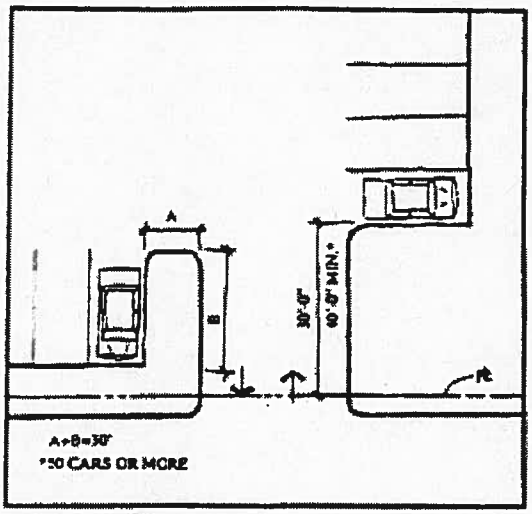


Figure 10.

k. Where practical, lowering the grade of the parking lot form surrounding street elevations may assist in reducing views of automobiles while promoting desired views of architectural elements.

l. Design parking areas so that the pedestrians walk is parallel to moving cars. Minimize the need for the pedestrians to cross parking aisles, landscape planters and driveways.

m. Tree wells shall be minimum 4' x 4' clear inside and finger planters shall be at least 8' wide and shall be spaced no further apart than 10 parking spaces.

n. Parking aisle layout should be designed to be perpendicular to building, rather than parallel in order to avoid pedestrian damage to landscaping.

o. Where landscape planters in parking lot are parallel to the building, walkways should be provided in the planters to facilitate access to the building from the parking lot.

p. Provide parking access between two adjacent parking lots.

3. Site Access Locations

a. Common driveways which provide vehicular access to more than one site are encouraged. (See Figure 11).

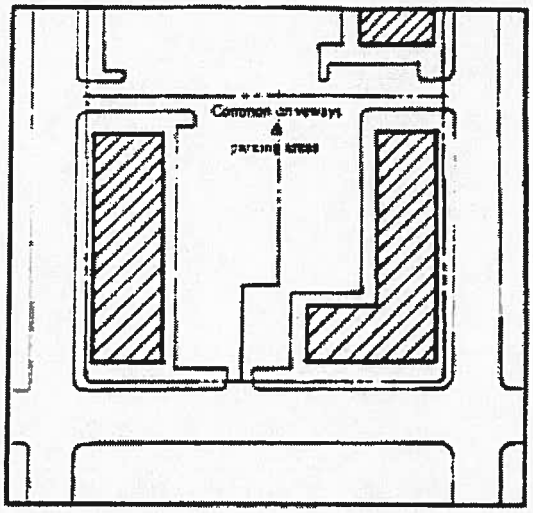


Figure 11.

b. Where a corner location is being developed, locate entry driveways on side streets (or the less busy street) to minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts and maximize landscaping on the busy location, design the entry driveway so that the interruption of pedestrian paths by automobile circulation is minimum. Appropriate care should be taken to insure the safety of pedestrians and to provide handicapped accessibility.

c. Encourage development projects to incorporate reciprocal access easements for car circulation between sites/properties.

d. Provide special patterned and/or colored concrete paving at all entry driveways and in front of main building entry.

e. Minimize number of driveways onto public or private streets.

f. Provide adequate separation between driveways and median breaks to minimize conflict. Coordinate driveway location with adjacent developments. Minimum 300 ft. separation is generally considered adequate for each parcel (See Figure 12).

g. Driveways shall be located as far as possible but no less than 150 ft. from street intersections. All driveways are subject to review by the City Traffic Engineer. (See Figure 12).

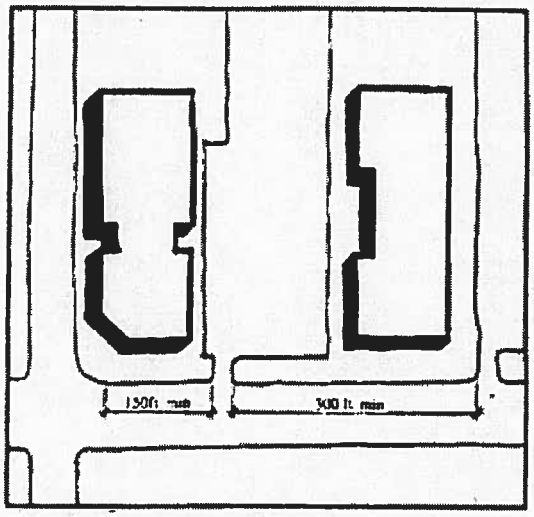


Figure 12.

h. Landscaping adjacent to driveway ingress/egress areas shall be designed such that it does not obstruct visibility of traffic.

4. On Site Circulation

a. Provide separate vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems. Pedestrian linkages between buildings in commercial developments including pedestrian access from parking areas should be clearly indicated.

b. Vehicular circulation through a parking facility should be directed away from fire lanes (adjacent to the rear side of buildings) to the outer edge of the parking lot where there is less pedestrian traffic.

c. Where parking areas for two different sites connect, the parking circulation should be integrated to avoid conflict at points of connection.

d. Provide sidewalks adjacent to parking and also special paving at pedestrian crossings to enhance and clearly define pedestrian circulation.

5. Preferred Paving Materials

a. Concrete, integrally colored, and textured, or exposed aggregate. Pedestrian safety should be considered when using stamped concrete or other irregular surfaces for pedestrian walkways. Plain-brushed gray concrete is discouraged. However, accent bands of a different concrete finish are encouraged.

b. Paving brick or tile.

c. Natural stones.

E. Signage[3]

1. Purpose and Intent

The following guidelines should be considered in the design of all signs within the City. These guidelines are intended to provide guidance in the way signs are designed, constructed, and placed in order to further implement the purposes of Division 5. (Sign Regulations) of the Zoning Ordinance.

These sign design guidelines are intended to promote the highest level of sign design quality and creativity, while in keeping with the overall character of the community of Agoura Hills. The guidelines will assist property owners and business owners in understanding city expectations and reduce time and cost for processing sign approvals.

2. General Sign Design

[3] Revisions adopted on May 11, 2005 per Ordinance No. 05-330.

a. Signs should be integrated with the design of the building. A well-designed building facade or storefront is created by the careful coordination of sign and architectural design, building materials and over-all color scheme.

b. The scale of signs should be appropriate for the building on which they are placed and the area in which they are located. The size and shape of a sign should be proportionate with the scale and proportion of the structure.

c. The layout and shape of the architectural features of the building should be considered when determining the size and location of a sign.

d. New signs proposed for existing buildings shall provide a compatible appearance with the existing signage of other tenants. Signs should attempt to unify the business with its nearest neighboring tenants.

e. With multiple signs on a single building, there should be a unifying element (such as size), even where no sign program exists. The design and alignment of signs on multiple use buildings should complement each other such that a unified appearance is achieved.

f. All signs shall complement their surroundings without competing with each other and shall convey their message clearly and legibly.

g. New building construction and design shall anticipate signage and, where necessary, a sign program. New building design should provide logical sign areas, allowing flexibility for new users as the building is re-tenanted over time. Designs of building facades and wall exteriors which provide for convenient and attractive replacement of signs are encouraged.

3. Sign Colors

a. Color is one of the most important aspects of visual communication -- it can be used to catch the eye or to communicate ideas or feelings. Colors should be selected to contribute to legibility and design integrity. Even the most carefully thought out sign may be unattractive and a poor communicator because of poor color selection. Too many colors used thoughtlessly can confuse and negate the message of a sign.

b. Contrast is an important influence on the legibility of signs. A substantial contrast should be provided between the color and material of the background and the letters or symbols to make the sign easier to read in both day and night. Light letters on a dark background or dark letters on a light background are most legible.

c. The colors and lettering styles should complement the building façade and harmonize with neighboring businesses.

d. A sign program with a multi-color sign palette utilizing a maximum of five (5) colors may be considered for shopping center with one (1) or more major tenants. It must be demonstrated that the multi-color sign program has been carefully planned to avoid glaring, haphazard color selection. The color combination must achieve a harmonious appearance. Unifying elements should be incorporated into the sign program design:

e. For projects using a three to five color sign program, back-lighted reverse channel letters are encouraged for the inline tenant signs.

f. When using three to five colors, it may be appropriate to use a single type of letter style (font). Letter height and size for inline stores should be consistent throughout the project. Architectural detail, i.e. tile accents, moldings, etc. should be considered around each signage area to provide an element of consistency.

g. The shade of a color should be consistent within a project, i.e. the same shade of yellow, blue or red, etc.

h. Use of bright colors is strongly discouraged and the use of fluorescent colors is prohibited.

4. Sign Materials

a. The following sign materials are recommended:

- High-density pre-formed foam – painted or otherwise finished to compliment the building architecture. New materials may be appropriate if properly designed in a manner consistent with

these guidelines, and painted or otherwise finished to compliment the architecture.

- Ceramic tile – painted or sandblasted.
- Wood – carved or sandblasted.
- Metal – formed, etched, cast or engraved.
- Stone – natural stone indigenous to the area.
- Stucco or stone monument signs with recessed or raised lettering.

b. Sign materials should be compatible with the design of the face of the facade where they are placed. The selected materials should contribute to the legibility of the sign.

c. Exterior materials, finishes, and colors should be the same or similar to those of the building or structures on site,

d. Signs should be professionally designed and constructed using high-quality materials

e. Internally lit plastic cabinet or can signs are prohibited.

f. Visible raceways and transformers for individual letters are prohibited unless the raceways are architecturally integrated (recessed) into the building wall. Sign installation details shall indicate the location of the transformer and other mechanical equipment.

g. No exposed neon is allowed.

h. The color of the trim caps shall match the color of the letter face, the cabinet return, or the building wall color.

5. Sign Copy and Lettering Style

a. Signs composed of individual letters are encouraged. Back-lit (halo-lit, or reverse pan channel) letters are generally desirable for logos and wider individual letters.

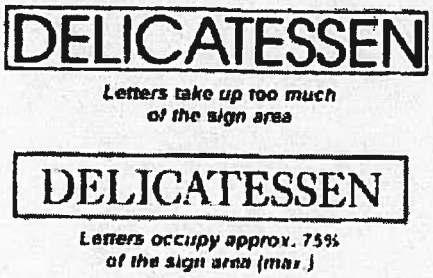
b. Modifications to logos and corporate identifiers may be required to fit attractively into the sign space provided.

c. Separate logo/graphic elements consistent with the nature of the product to be advertised, are limited to twenty (20%) percent of the total sign area. The height of the logo/graphic element may differ from the height of the letters in the business name.

d. Sign fonts shall be selected to provide both clarity and artistic integrity.

e. Use a brief message. The fewer words utilized, the more effective the sign. A sign with a brief, succinct message is simpler and faster to read, looks cleaner and is more attractive.

f. Carefully consider the proportion of letter area to overall sign background area. Large letters take up too much sign and they may be harder to read. Large letters are not necessarily more legible than smaller ones. A general rule is that letters should not appear to occupy more than 75% of the sign panel area.



g. A limited number of lettering styles should be employed in sign design to increase legibility. The number of different lettering types should not exceed two for small signs and three for larger signs.

h. Upper and lower case letters are easier to read and should be utilized when using long words.

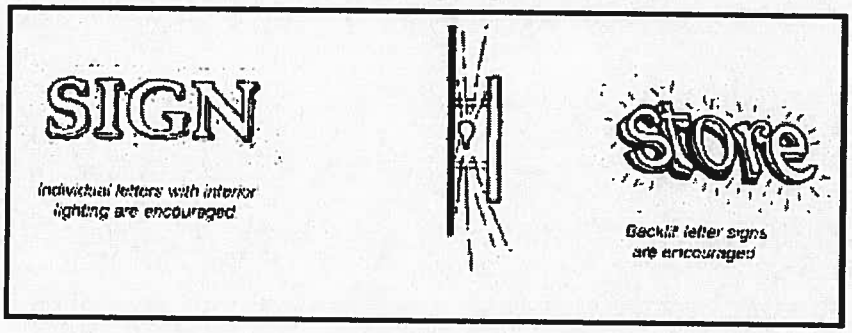
i. Letters and words should not be spaced too close together. Crowding of letters, words or lines will make any sign more difficult to read. Conversely, over-spacing these elements causes the viewer to read each item individually, again obscuring the message.

6. Sign Illumination

a. The illumination of a sign should be carefully considered. Like color, illumination can provide more effective visual communication, or can confuse the message. Imaginative and innovative lighting techniques for signs are encouraged.

b. The lighting of signs should be considered as an element in a building's overall lighting design. Both internal and external lighting methods are allowed provided that they are not harsh or unnecessarily bright.

c. Back-lit, halo-lit illumination, or reverse channel letters with halo illumination are highly encouraged for lighting purposes. Such signs convey a subtle and attractive appearance and are very legible under moderate ambient lighting conditions.



d. Light sources for externally lighted signs shall be integrated into the architectural design of the building and/or project, or be concealed.

e. Consider if the sign needs to be lighted at all. Lights in the window display may be sufficient to identify the business. Often, nearby street lights provide ample illumination of a sign after dark.

f. Whenever external lighting fixtures are used (fluorescent or incandescent), care should be taken to properly shield the light source to prevent glare from spilling over into residential areas and any public right-of-way. Signs should be lighted only to the minimum level required for nighttime readability.

g. Signs should not exceed (1) foot candle of projected brightness measured at the nearest property line.

h. External lighting shall be completely shielded from view at the nearest property line and shall not project above the structure upon which the sign is placed (i.e. building or monument sign).

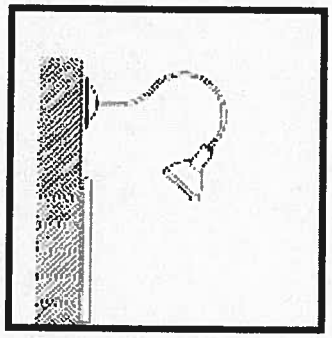
i. Signs shall be shaded as necessary to avoid casting a bright light upon property located in any residential district or upon any public street or park.

j. External lighting should be arranged so that the light source is screened from direct view by passersby, and so that the light is directed against the sign and does not shine into adjacent property or blind motorists and pedestrians.

k. Signs that use blinking or flashing lights are not permitted.

l. Exposed neon tubing used to illuminate and/or accent a building, and exterior neon window signs are prohibited.

m. Projecting light fixtures used for externally illuminated signs should be simple and unobtrusive in appearance and aimed directly at the sign. They should not obscure the graphics of the sign.

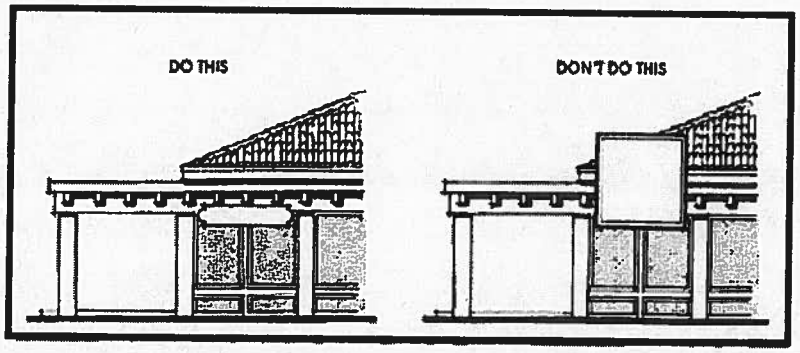


7. Sign Placement

a. Place wall signs to establish facade rhythm, scale and proportion where facade rhythm doesn't exist. On buildings that have a monolithic or plain facade, signs can establish or continue appropriate design rhythm, scale, and proportion.

b. The architecture of the building often identifies specific locations for signs, and these locations should be used.

c. The size of signs shall be in proportion to the size of their location.



d. Place signs to indicate the location of access to a business - Signs should be placed at or near the entrance to a building or site to indicate the most direct access to the business. For multi-tenant buildings, the sign should be centered over the store front.

e. Signs should not be located above the fascia on a pitch roof building or on the top of a parapet when no pitch roof is provided.

f. Repetitious signage information on the same building frontage shall be avoided, regardless of the sign area square footage allowed in the zoning code.

8. Sign Maintenance

a. All signs are to be maintained properly such that they are always in clean, working condition and the copy is not obscured or damaged. This includes components of the sign exposed to view as well as the illumination.

b. Signage should be vandal proof and weather resistant.

c. When replacing or modifying a channel letter sign, all unused holes in the building wall must be patched, painted and textured to completely match the surrounding building sign surface.

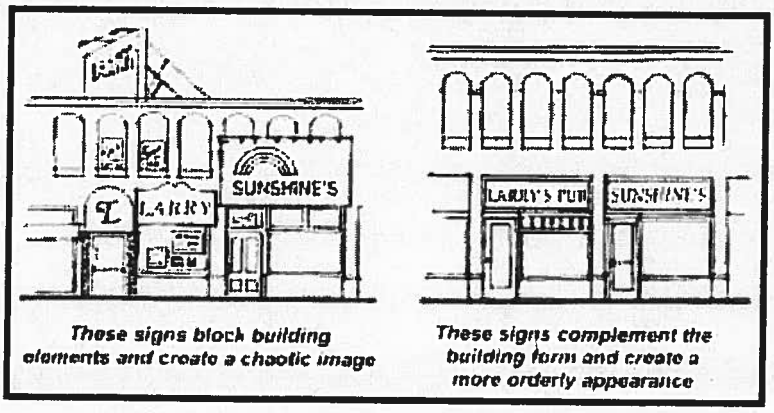
d. Signs which are replaced on stucco exteriors can result in unattractive "patched" areas. This potential maintenance problem shall be addressed during the design phase of the project.

9. Specific Sign Types

a. Wall Signs

Wall signs are generally the most used type of business identification signing. Located on the face of buildings they are usually larger than other types of signage.

- The sign shall not be placed to obstruct any portion of a window, doorway, transom, or other architectural detail. Typically, wall-mounted signs should be centered on horizontal surfaces (e.g. over a storefront opening).



These signs block building elements and create a chaotic image

These signs complement the building form and create a more orderly appearance

- The maximum area and height shall be as defined in 9655.8 - Sign Entitlement by Land Use. In no case shall the sign project above the edge of the roof of a structure.

- Internally illuminated reverse letter and backlit channel letter signs are strongly encouraged. Internally illuminated cabinet signs are not permitted.

- The sign shall not project from the surface upon which it is attached more than required for construction purposes and in no case more than twelve inches. Wall Signs are to be mounted flush and fixed securely to a building wall, projecting no more than 12 inches from the face of a building wall, and not extending sideways beyond the building face or above the highest line of the building to which it is attached.

- Wall signs shall be mounted in locations that respect the design integrity of a building, including the arrangement of bays and openings.

- Building wall and fascia signs should be compatible with the predominant visual elements of the building

- Where there is more than one (1) sign; all signs should be complementary to each other in the following ways:

    - Type of construction materials (cabinet, sign copy, supports, etc.)
    - Letter size and style of copy
    - Method used for supporting sign (wall or ground base)
    - Configuration of sign area
    - Shape to total sign and related components

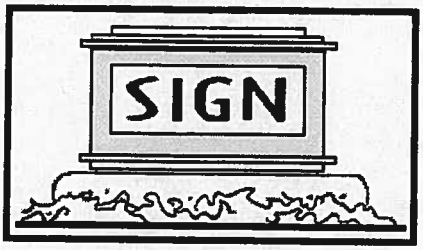
- Internally illuminated cabinet signs are discouraged. Internally illuminated, reverse letter and backlit channel letter signs are encouraged.

- When wall signs are architecturally framed, the frame should create a clearly defined sign area, providing shadow relief and additional wall/surface articulation on the building façade.

- The maximum sign length should not exceed sixty-five (65%) percent of the storefront length, in order to provide clear definition between signs and to avoid a crowded appearance.

b. Monument signs (Identification, Directory or Address)

Monument signs are intended to provide street frontage project identification and the address for a freestanding building or shopping center or development complex. Monument signs are typically placed perpendicular to approaching vehicular traffic.



- The sign shall be located a minimum of five (5) feet from any public or private right-of-way and shall comply with city standards for vehicular sight distance at the driveway intersection with the frontage street.

- Monument signs should be sited in a manner that provides optimum visibility to the public.

- The sign shall be a maximum of forty-eight (48) square feet in area. Only one side of a double-faced (back to back) sign shall be included when calculating sign area. Sign area calculations shall not include architectural treatments or support structures.

- The maximum height of a monument sign shall be six (6) feet. Architectural treatments or support structures shall be included in the height measurement.

- The design of a monument sign shall be consistent with the overall scale of the building and shall be constructed with materials that complement the architectural theme and design used on the building(s). Each side, front, back and top of a monument sign shall include breaks. Design elements such as off-sets, curved forms, reveals, etc. are encouraged.

- The use of plastic material as a background is not permitted. The sign background material shall be opaque, which means that any interior light source shall not penetrate the material and illuminate the background but shall be limited to illuminating the sign letters.

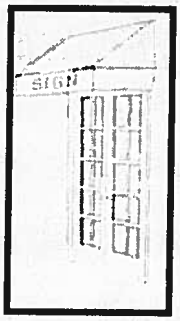
- Landscaping shall be provided at the base of the supporting structure equal to twice the area of one face of the sign. The

Director may reduce or waive this requirement if it is determined that the additional landscaping would not contribute significantly to the overall aesthetic character of the project.

- Monument signs should be constructed out of materials that compliment the building architecture and its use.
- Architectural lines which compliment that of the building shall be incorporated, especially with respect to the top of the sign.
- The design of the sign structure and the text should express high quality materials and construction.
- Monument signs should include a 2 ft. high (min) base. The base color(s) and material(s) should be compatible with the architectural theme of the building or building complex.
- The base should be complementary and proportional to the size of the sign.
- Free-standing sign bases shall be made of permanent, durable materials. Stonework similar to City street identification signs is strongly encouraged.
- A minimum of 10% of the sign area of freestanding signs for large multi-story buildings or center developments should be devoted to identification of the center or building by address or name.

c. Awning and Canopy Signs

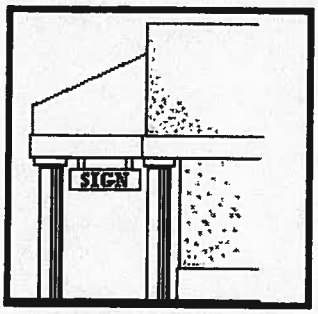
Awnings and canopies can be incorporated into shopping centers to add color to the shopping environment and are often more visible from passing automobiles and by pedestrians from the opposite side of the street, especially in circumstances where street trees partially obstruct wall signs.



- Awning and canopy signs may be allowed only as an integral part of the awning or canopy to which they are attached or applied.
- Signs may be placed only on awnings that are located on first story building frontages, including those fronting a parking lot or pedestrian way.
- The sign area for awning and canopy signs shall be included within the basic sign entitlement.
- No structural element of an awning or canopy shall be located less than eight feet above finished grade.
- Sign text or logo areas should not occupy more than 30% of the awning panel.
- Awnings and canopies shall not be internally illuminated. Lighting directed downwards that does not illuminate the awning is allowed.
- Awnings should utilize a solid color and be made of woven fabric (and not vinyl).
- Metal canopies may be appropriate on some buildings if they are compatible in scale and overall design. Canopies should be simple in design and not obscure architectural features.
- Awning and canopy signs shall be regularly cleaned and kept free of dust and visible defects.
- Awnings and canopies must be permanently attached to buildings.
- The minimum height of awnings shall be 8 feet from the lowest point to the sidewalk.
- The color scheme for awning and canopy signs should be compatible and integral to the building architecture.

d. Under Canopy or Hanging Signs

Under canopy or hanging walkway signs may be used for pedestrian oriented business identification, in addition to the standard on building tenant signage.



- The sign shall be placed or hung only on a ground floor facade, near the main entrance of the business, except for businesses located above the ground level with direct exterior pedestrian access.

- The lowest point of an under canopy sign shall be at least eight feet above finished grade.

- Sign supports and brackets shall be compatible with the design and scale of the sign.

- Sign design, materials and color(s) should complement and enhance the building architecture and should be uniform throughout the shopping center.

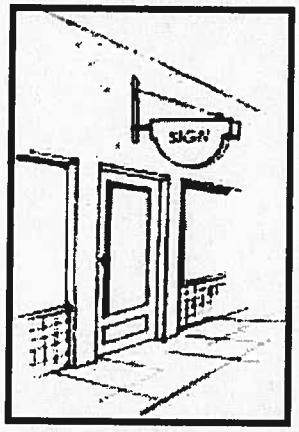
- Hanging signs, excluding supporting rods, chains or similar hangers, shall fit within an imaginary rectangle with a maximum area of 4 square feet.

- Signs shall be oriented toward the pedestrian and impart a sense of creativity in its design.

- Internal illumination of under canopy or hanging signs is prohibited.

e. Projecting signs

Projecting signs are allowed only as pedestrian signage and shall be oriented to pedestrians passing on the sidewalk in front of the building. These signs feature simple information or can be uniquely designed with colors and icons to attract attention to the business.



- The sign area shall be included within the basic sign entitlement. Size uniformity should be maintained along street frontages to the greatest extent possible. The text, copy and logo should not exceed 75% of the sign background.

- The height shall not be less than eight feet above the ground level, unless the architectural features of the structure prohibit this height.

- Projecting signs shall be oriented to pedestrians passing on the sidewalk in front of the buildings rather than to automobiles or pedestrians on the far side of the street. This can be achieved by providing a minimum clearance of 12 inches between the building face and sign and maintaining a projection of 36 inches.

- Sign supports and brackets shall be compatible with the design and scale of the sign. Mounting hardware should be an attractive and integral part of the sign design.

- Projecting signs should be carefully designed to reflect the character of each building and business as well as fitting comfortably with other adjacent signage.

- Projecting signs may not be mounted above the second floor window-sill in multi-storied buildings.

- Size uniformity should be maintained along street frontages to the greatest extent possible.

- Internal illumination of projecting signs is prohibited.

f. Temporary Signs

Temporary Signs can take the form of banners, window graphics, or as cards integrated with a window display. Temporary signs may contain written messages and should use a simple font that is easy to read.

- Temporary signs should be made of durable materials and shall not incorporate fluorescent or intensely bright colors.
- Temporary signs should be carefully designed and constructed, as they reflect on the quality of the business.
- Temporary signs should not interfere with pedestrian circulation.
- Illumination of temporary signs is prohibited.

F. Pedestrian Systems

To establish a pedestrian friendly environment the following building element are encouraged.

1. Courtyards
   a. Courtyards shall be functional.

   b. The courtyard spaces can be designed to function as entry/transition spaces, focal points and/or building circulation nodes. (See Figure 13A &13B).

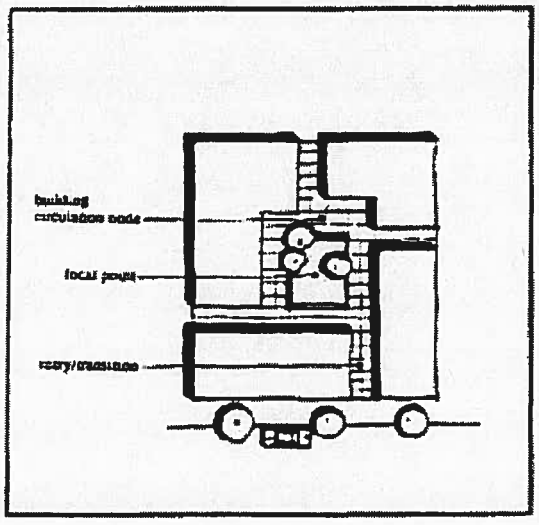


Figure 13A.

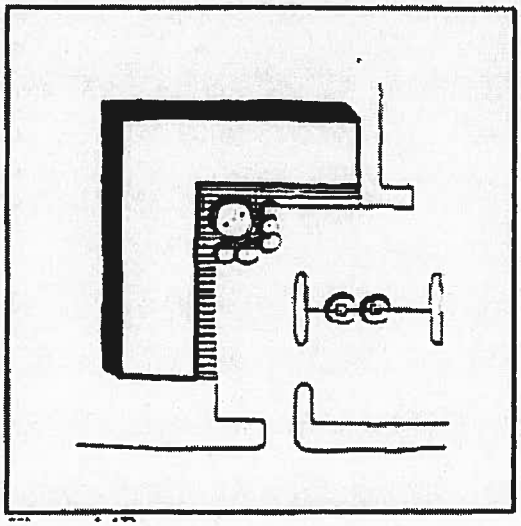


Figure 13B.

2. Covered Walkways & Overhangs

a. Minimum depth should provide sun and rain protection and coverage for walkway. (See Figure 14).

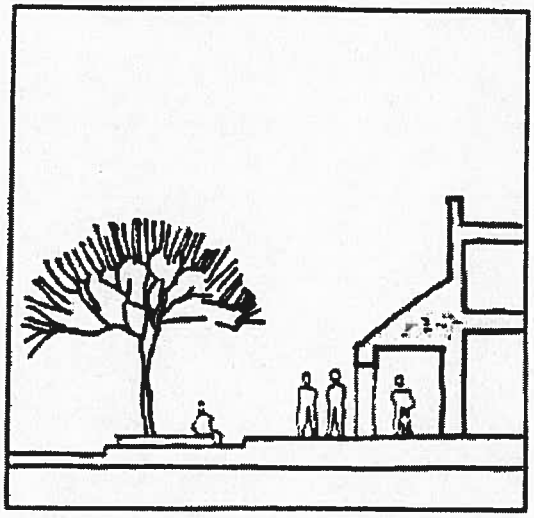


Figure 14.

b. Covered walkways and overhangs can be designed to function as pedestrian covers and/or façade articulation by incorporating a colonnade into a building. Avoid "façade front" treatments with poorly proportioned columns or pilasters (See Figure 15A & 15B).

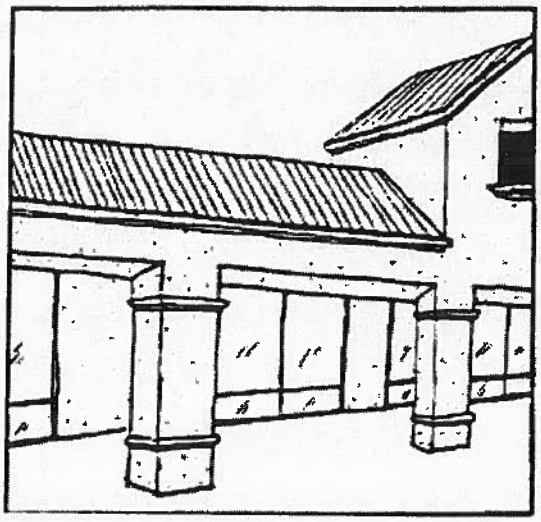


Figure 15A. (YES)

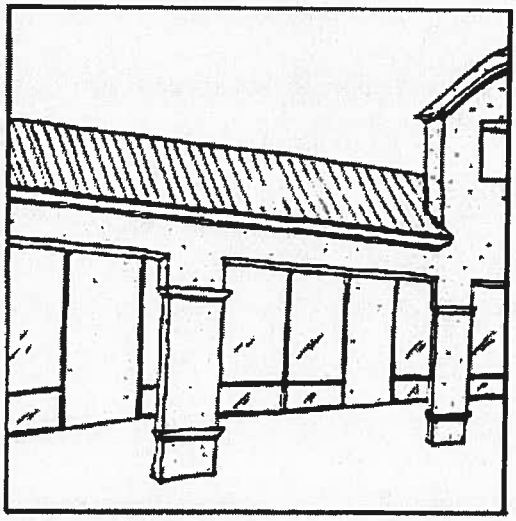


Figure 15B. (NO)

3. Pathways

a. Minimum width of pathways should be 6'-0" for a primary access path and 4'-0" for secondary access path.

b. The following should be considered in designing pathways:

1. Integrate pedestrian scale lighting patterns and designs.

2. Integrate landscape patterns and designs.

3. Use decorative paving materials and patterns to add interest to the ground plane.

4. Incorporate and integrate handicap access requirements.

G. Fences and Walls

1. Treatment

a. Wherever possible and appropriate, alternate methods of providing the desired level of security, privacy and sound attenuation should be considered. Wider setbacks, open space, and landscaping such as beams, mounding and planting are other alternatives. Any such use of beaming shall be free flowing, meandering, irregularly shaped and varying in elevation.

b. If a wall or fencing is the only alternative, any wall in excess of 25 feet in length should be interrupted by such design elements as vertical plant materials, wall columns or decorative inlays. (See Figure 16).

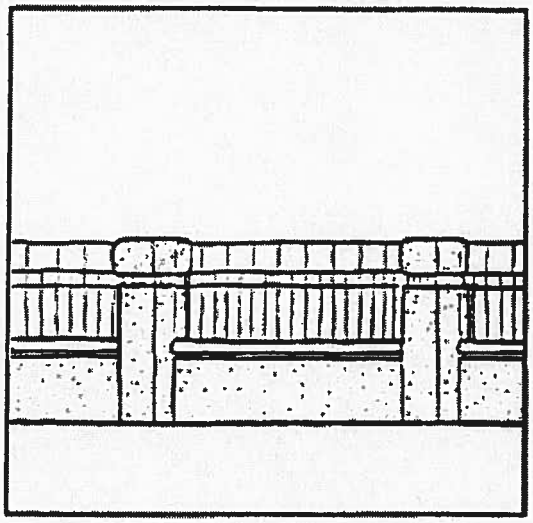


Figure 16.

c. When appropriate, alternative means of dealing with slopes which incorporates landscaping should be considered in lieu of solid retaining walls.

2. Materials

a. Wall and fence materials, colors and finishes shall compliment the materials, color and finish of the building(s) and/or those on adjacent properties. Use of untreated chain link fence and barbed wire is strictly prohibited.

H. Ground Mounted Mechanical & Electrical Equipment

1. Ground-mounted equipment shall be completely screened from view with decorative walls and landscaping.

2. Locate all utility equipment away from street frontages in heavily landscaped or planter areas.

I. Trash Enclosures

1. Location

a. Distribute to facilitate use by tenants/users
b. Screen views from public right-of-way areas
c. Reserve space to accommodate future recycling bins

2. Design

Incorporate detailing and articulation used in the buildings such as reveals, cornices, bans, tiles, etc.

3. Materials and Colors

Incorporate colors and materials used on the building where appropriate.

J. Site Lighting (See Section III.G Exterior Lighting)

K. Landscape

The purpose of these Standards and Guidelines is to define clearly the manner in which landscape plans shall be submitted to satisfy the landscaping requirements of the city. It is the intent of these Standards and Guidelines to offer the applicant as much latitude possible in aesthetically designing the project's landscaping, while at the same time, meeting the all landscape standards of the City. These Standards and Guidelines shall not supersede Sections 9657 & 9658 of the Zoning Ordinance.

1. Landscaping should be evenly distributed throughout the site. The overall landscape design for the specific site shall be compatible with all adjoining developments surrounding the site.

2. Function

Landscaping should be fully and creatively designed to enhance, highlight and support the architecture not to conceal design weaknesses. The scale and size of the proposed landscape shall be comparable to the scale and size of the proposed structures.

3. Criteria

a. High quality landscape.

b. Abundance of attractive ornamental and native plants.

c. Conservation of water through the use of drought tolerant plants and water saving irrigation systems.

d. Labor saving and low-maintenance landscape designs.

e. Automatic watering system sensors are strongly encouraged.

f. A combination of deciduous and evergreen trees

g. A program of landscape maintenance and selective plant pruning which enhances natural growth patterns, particularly for trees in parking lot areas to accomplish the 50% shade requirement with 15 years per the requirements of Municipal Code Section 9654.5.B.

h. Connect with existing reclaimed water line or design irrigation system such that it is compatible with plans for future reclaimed water lines.

4. Acceptable Plant Materials and Applications

a. All applicants are encouraged to take full advantage of the wide range of landscape materials and design possibilities with the framework established by these Standards and Guidelines which describe the landscape standards, the proper use of landscaping, and a suggested plant list of native and interesting plant materials.

b. Use of Plant Materials: The scope of a project will ultimately determine landscape plant selection. In order for landscaping to relate to architectural design, the following criteria shall apply.

1. Deciduous trees and large shrubs are effectively used to act as an intermediate height element to bring buildings into human scale.

2. Medium/low shrubs are ornamental and provide foliage, texture and color to landscape themes.

3. Vines and espaliers are effective screens in visually softening wall and fences. Many vines provide excellent flower color to brighten narrow planters against buildings and walls.

4. Applicable native plant materials and drought tolerant species are strongly encouraged for water conservation.

5. Trees are encouraged against buildings to soften the appearance of walls and to visually screen neighboring projects and subdivided exterior spaces. (See Figure 17).

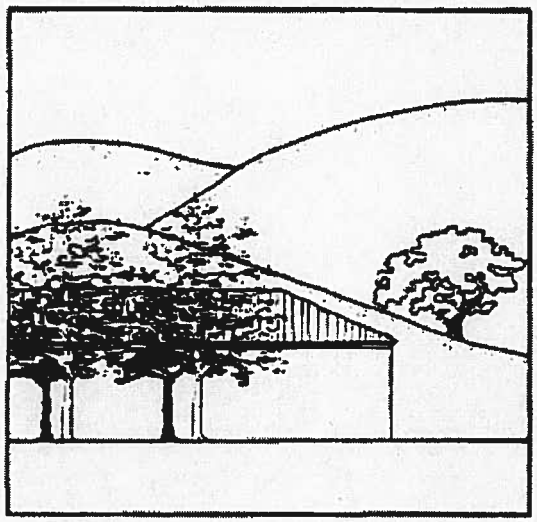


Figure 17.

6. Entrances and exits may be identified and accentuated through the use of tall vertical landscaping.

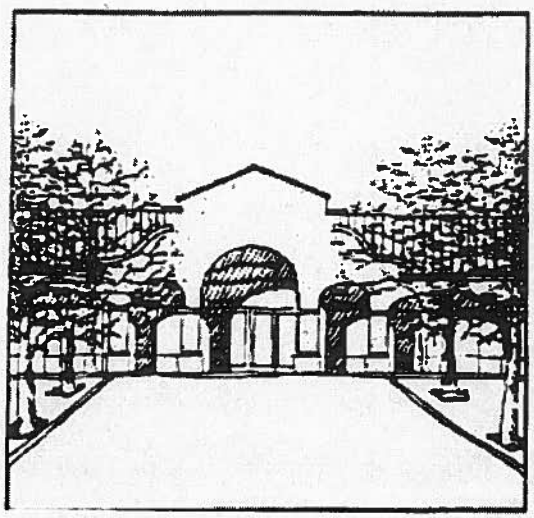


Figure 18A.

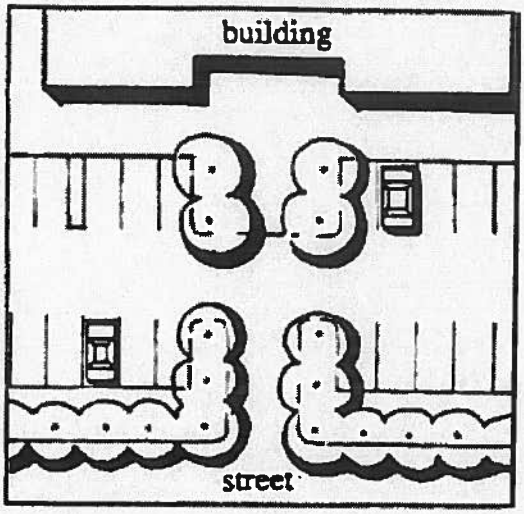


Figure 18B.

7. Raised planters are encouraged to provide outdoor seating and/or eating.

8. Ground cover to control possible erosion on hillside conditions.

d. Concrete or 3 ply redwood bender boards shall be provided to separate turf from ground cover.

e. Provide six-inch concrete curb around all landscape planters adjacent to hardscape areas.

III. Building Design

A. Contextual Design

1. Unacceptable Design Elements.

a. "Trademark" or prototype designs

b. Nondescript or boxy buildings without any recognizable architectural character, style or detail. (See Figure 19).

c. Lighting accentuating or intending to accentuate advertising. (See Figure 19).

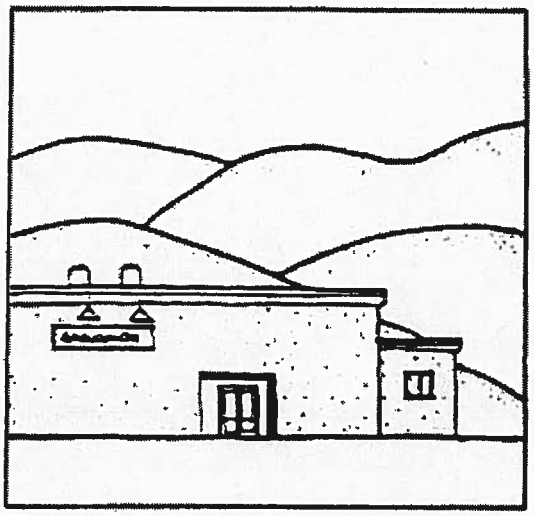


Figure 19.

d. Lighting not shielded and not arranged to reflect away from adjoining properties.

e. Architectural elements which are frivolous or contrived.

f. Untreated chain link fencing and barbed wire.

g. Bright, shiny or non-textured metal on exterior surfaces; porcelain, plastic or similar surfaces of non-earthen hues. Bright, fluorescent type or non-earthen tone colors.

h. Non-earthen tone colors except for possible accents.

i. Flat roofs without any other mitigating roofline elements.

j. Plastic or artificial landscaping.

k. Exposed neon of any type.

l. Unscreened or unobscured loading docks and trash and service areas.

2. Building and landscaped open spaces should be oriented for maximum benefit of sunlight, circulation and views.

3. Architectural detail

a. Surface detail, ornament and other elements such as cornices, applied moldings, soffits, reveals, accent bands, gutters, down spout and lig fixtures that provide visual interest, shadow, contrast and color that enrich architectural character are encouraged. Details should be integrated with the overall design concept of the building. (See Figure 20).

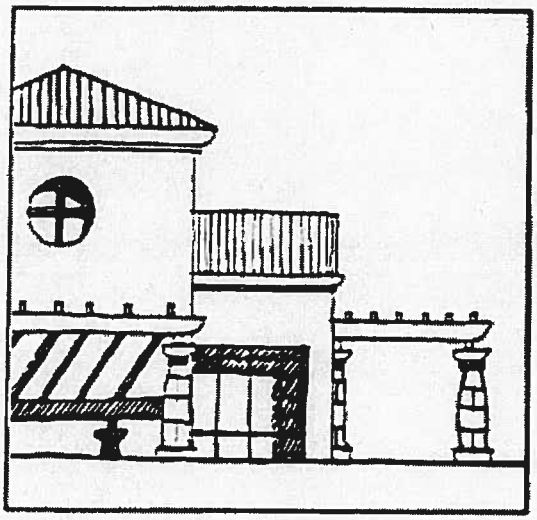


Figure 20.

b. Buildings should clearly articulate and define their parts. Articulate and define main building entrances. (See Figure 21A &21B).

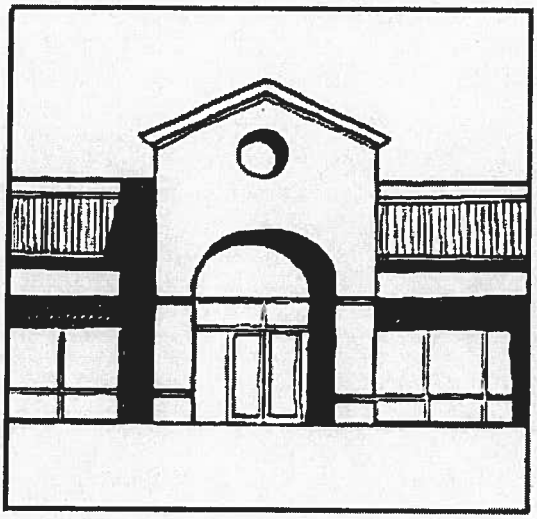


Figure 21A.

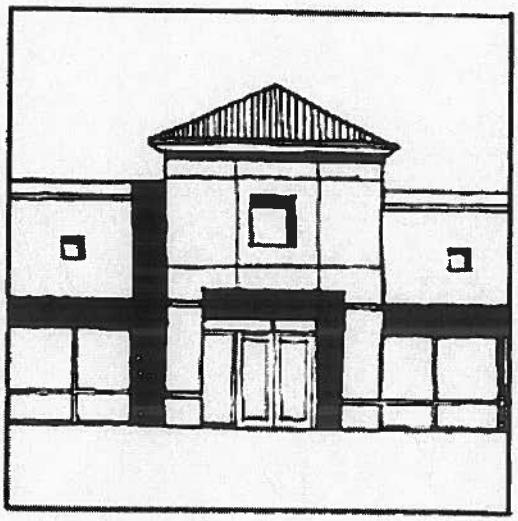


Figure 21B.

c. Buildings shall be designed to provide similar architectural relief and detail to all sides of the building. (See Figure 22A & 22B).

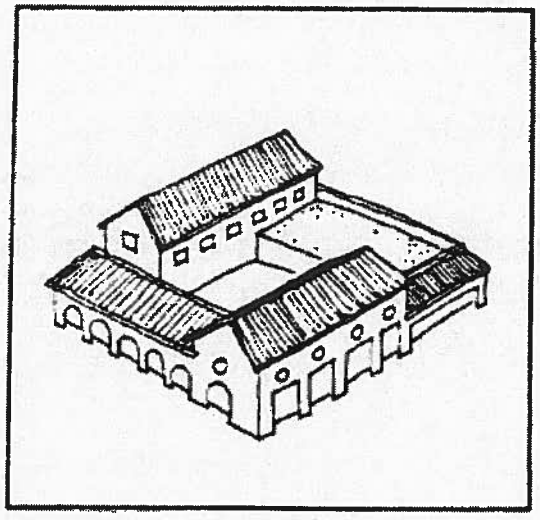


Figure 22A.

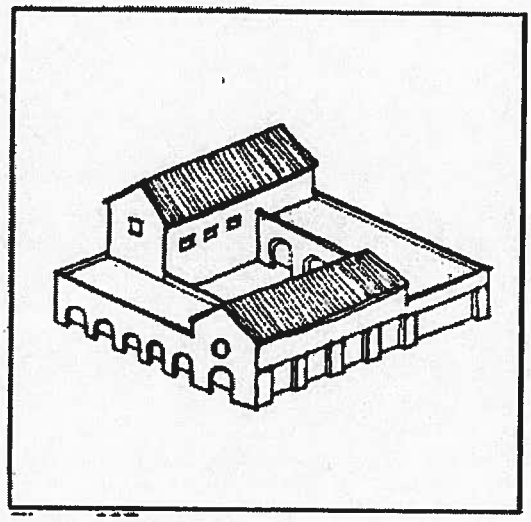


Figure 22B.

B. Building Size and Scale

1. Scale of the details should be appropriate to minimize a building's apparent bulk.

2. The predominant size and scale of surrounding development should help to determine the appropriate scale and size of new structures (See Figure 23A). Large scale buildings should be broken up and articulated since they may look imposing if they are surrounded by structures of smaller size and detail. Such buildings shall be rescaled accordingly. (See Figures 23A & 23B).

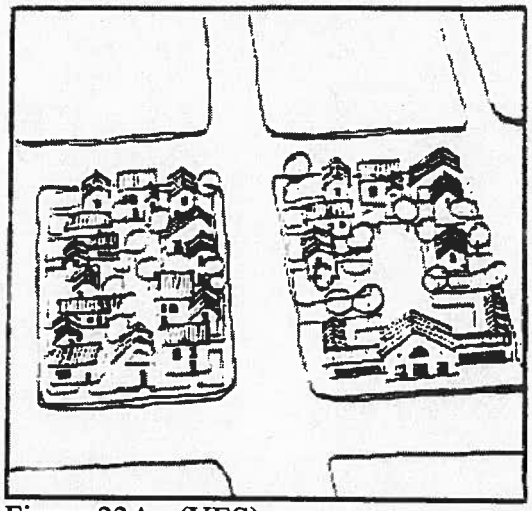


Figure 23A. (YES)

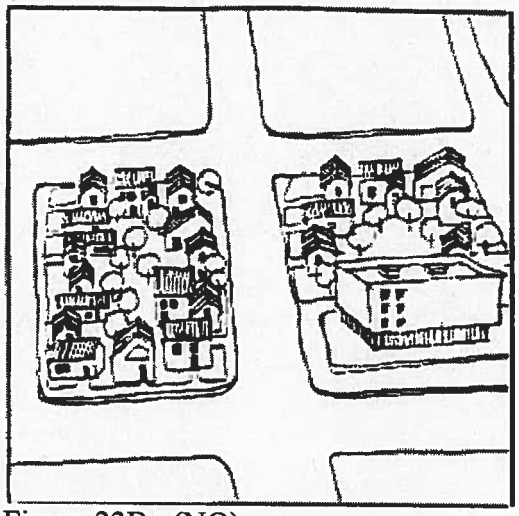


Figure 23B. (NO)

3. Stepping back of second stories and staggering the building footprint is encouraged where appropriate to reduce the scale of a building. (See Figure 24A).

4. See following illustration for building height measurement on hillside conditions. (See Figure 24B).

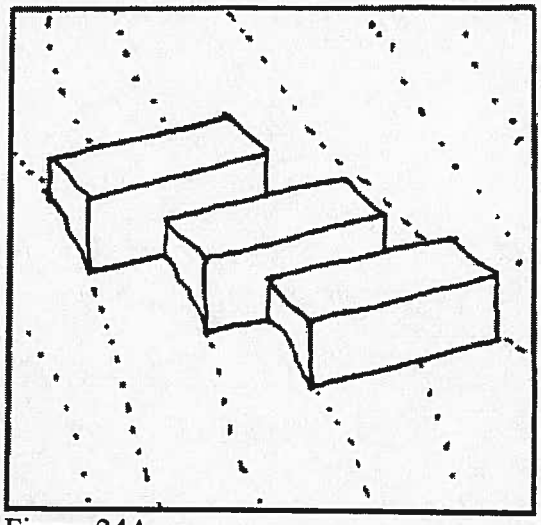


Figure 24A.

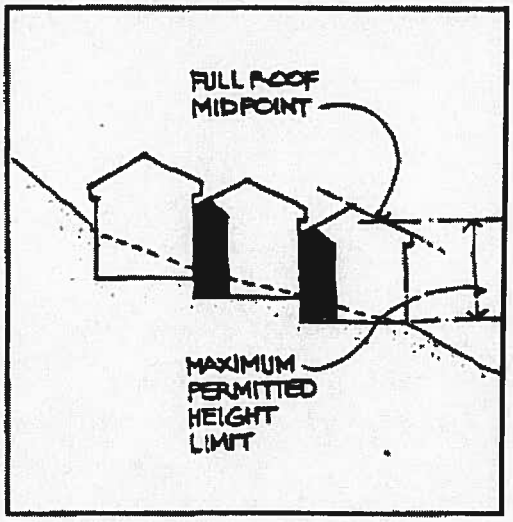


Figure 24B.

5. For buildings with large ground floor footprints, the following should be considered in order to reduce it scale.

   a. Avoid long blank walls by (See Figure 25A & 25B):

      1. Adding window openings/entrances and other relief.

      2. Providing recessed glazing and storefronts.

      3. Adding vertical pilasters which may reflect internal building structure.

      4. Changing color and texture along wall surface.

      5. Indenting portions of the wall, articulating masses in the façade.

      6. Adding trims, projections, and reveals along different levels of the wall surface.

      7. Articulate building façade by varying the building elements.

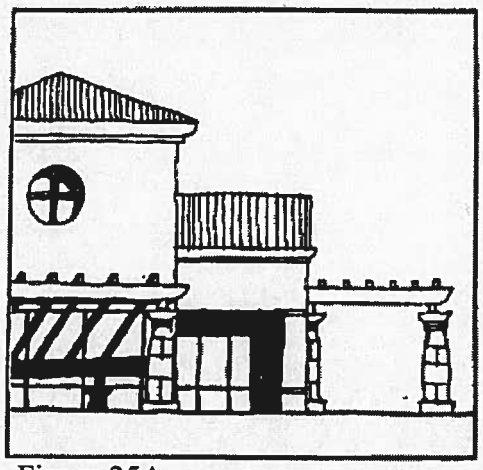


Figure 25A.

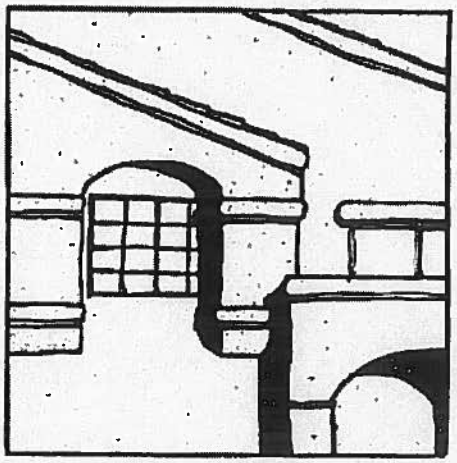


Figure 25B.

b. Minimize the vertical emphasis of architectural design elements by:

   1. Incorporating elements such as horizontal bands, reveals, trims, and overhangs along different levels of the wall surface.
   2. Minimizing use of towers or pilasters over two stories in height.

c. Concentrate detail along and around pedestrian circulation areas and entrances.

d. Vary spacing and distribution of architectural elements and details along building facades.

e. Wall thicknesses should be properly proportioned to avoid buildings with "façade" or "false front" like exterior.

f. Window/storefront distribution and shape can be significant building scale determinant. (See Figure 26A & 26B).

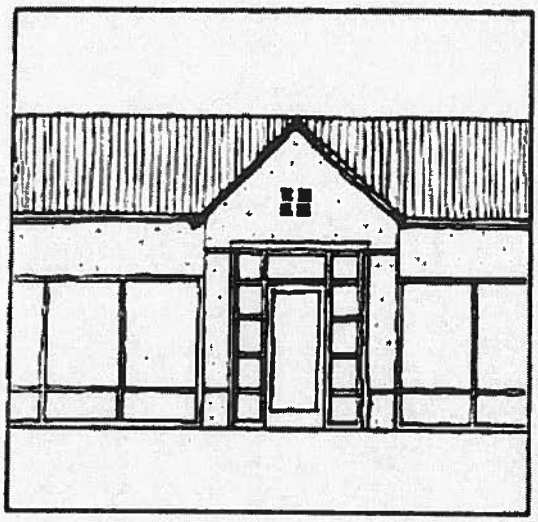


Figure 26A. (YES)

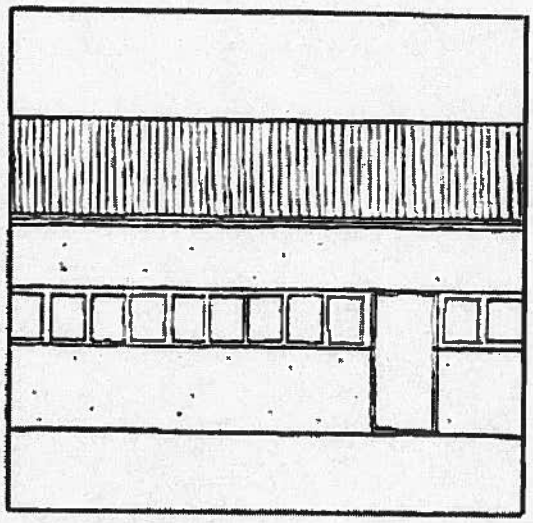


Figure 26B. (NO)

Avoid long horizontal window bands.

C. Building Height

1. The height of a building or group of buildings can have a profound effect on how a community is perceived. The following principles will help mitigate the potential adverse impacts of taller buildings.

   a. Building heights should relate to open spaces to allow maximum solar access and ventilation, protection from prevailing winds, enhance public views of surrounding hillsides and minimize obstruction of view from adjoining structures. The maximum building height per the Zoning Ordinance is 35 feet.

   b. Height and scale of a new development building should be compatible with and enhance the surrounding buildings. The new building should have transition portions so that it will compliment the existing surrounding buildings. These portions can make a step up or down in order to achieve a gradual transition between the building heights. (See Figure 27A & 27B).

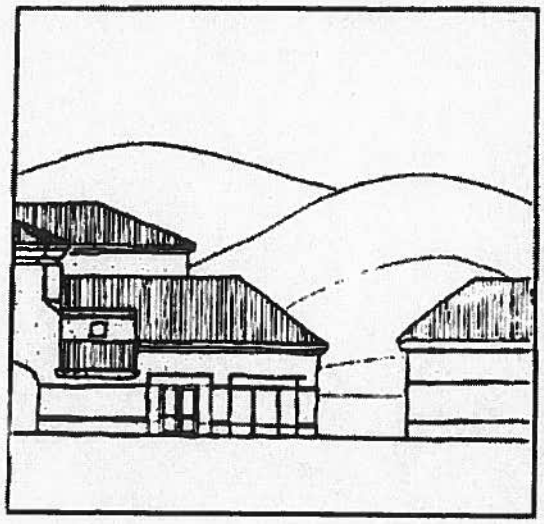


Figure 27A.

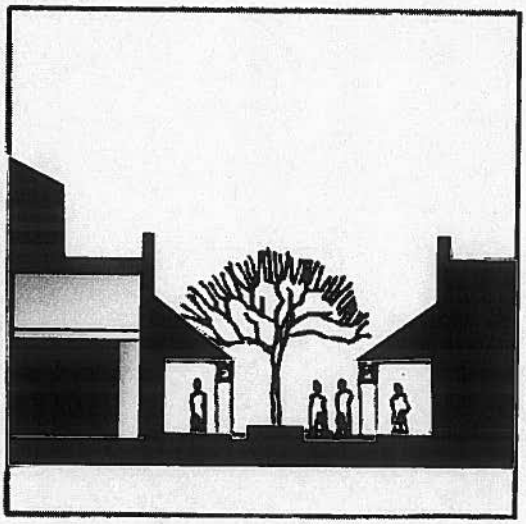


Figure 27B.

c. The use of "pedestal" designs (a building with a significantly smaller first floor area than the second floor area) creates spaces at the ground level for pedestrian oriented design features such as arcades and covered walkways. (See Figure 28).

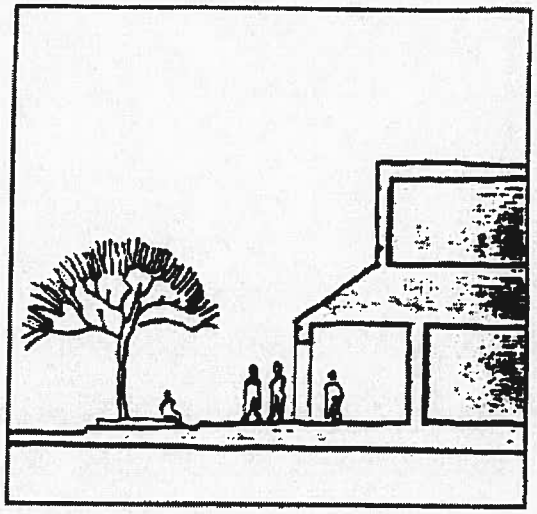


Figure 28.

d. Avoid blank walls at the ground floor level. Utilize windows, wall articulation, arcades, changes in materials or other features to avoid monolithic and blank ground floor walls. (See Figure 29A & 29B).

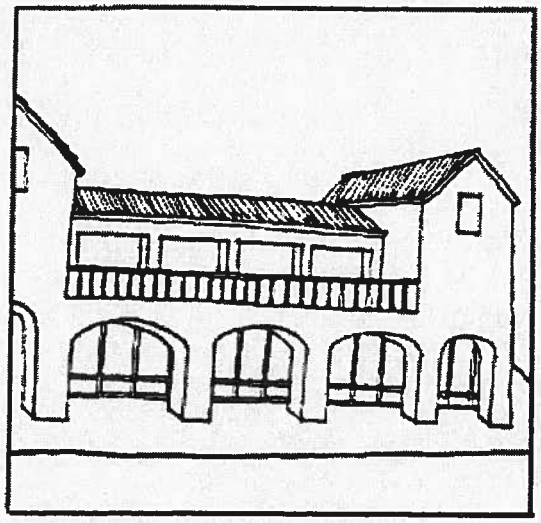


Figure 29A.

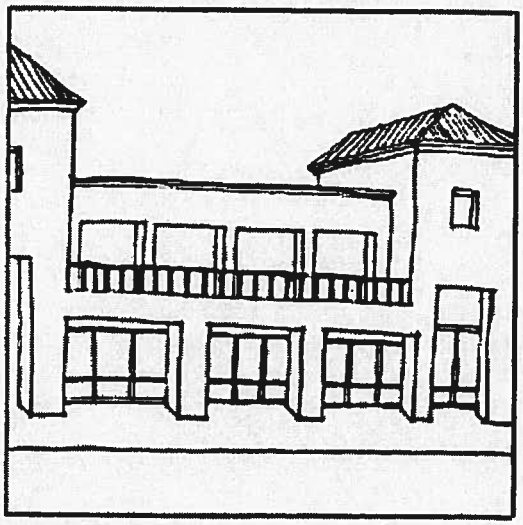


Figure 29B.

D. Building Bulk

1. Poorly articulated and detailed buildings tend to project a character of bulkiness and massiveness. This massiveness of buildings generally should be minimized, especially in parts of the city where residential character is impacted. Buildings should maintain a scale comparable with neighboring residential areas where applicable. (See Figure 23A & 23B).

2. Building masses which are necessarily of large proportions can be mitigated by elements such as entry courtyards and/or landscaping designed to focus attention on smaller-scaled elements of the building.

3. Large "boxy" buildings are generally unattractive and discouraged. There are several ways to reduce the appearance of excessive bulk and massiveness in buildings. For example, pergolas can be utilized as transition devices. (See Figure 30A & 30B).

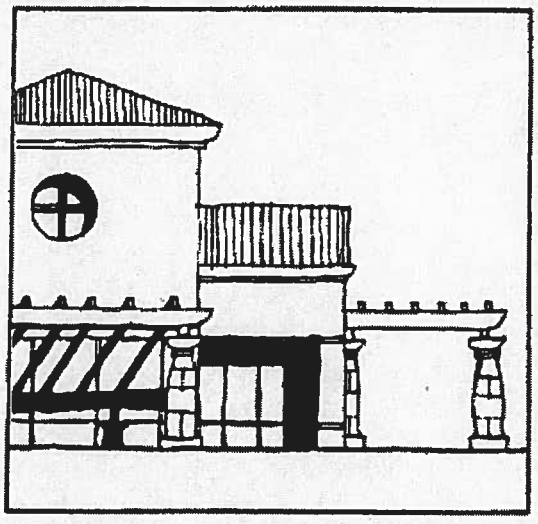


Figure 30A. (YES)

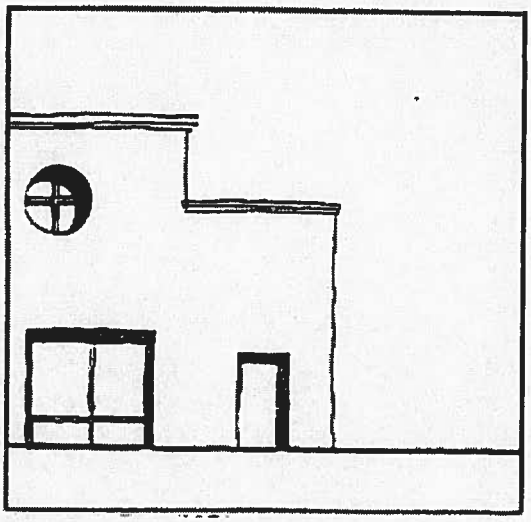


Figure 30B. (NO)

a. Vary the planes of the exterior walls in depth and/or direction.

b. Set back the storefront wall openings to reveal a substantial wall thickness. (See Figure 31A & 31B).

Figure 31A.

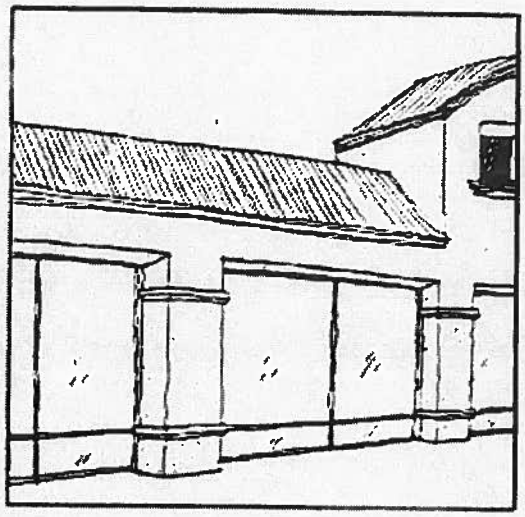


Figure 31B.

c. Vary the height and roof levels of the building so that it appears to be divided into distinct smaller massing elements.

d. Vary and offset roofline profiles along the top of the structure.

e. Articulate the base level of the building to be as pedestrian friendly as possible through the incorporation of amenities such as arcades, porches, trellises, seat walls, planters, etc.

f. Side walls at zero lot line conditions are strongly discouraged. Maintain adequate setback to provide for proper building articulation.

E. Building Materials/Colors

1. Unacceptable Materials

   a. Highly reflective materials, such as mirrored glass, steel, aluminum, metallic finishes and high gloss tiles should be avoided. The use of wood siding as an exterior material other than wood trim fascias is discouraged, with the exception of projects located with the Old Agoura Design District.

2. Acceptable Materials

   a. Primary building surfaces should be of brick, concrete (with fine exposed aggregate or sandblasted finish), or cement plaster. Accent materials and inlays such as tile, marble, granite are also encouraged.

   b. When wood siding is used, the siding and its application must meet the standards of Western Wood Products Association.

   c. If tilt-up concrete construction is used, it shall fully incorporate the recommendations of Section D (Building Bulk) and, in addition, it shall utilize bold reliefs with textured exposed aggregate surfaces or multi-textured surfaces on the exterior wall surfaces. Furthermore, openings, storefronts and entries shall be recessed a minimum of 24'

3. Restraint should be used in the number of different building materials selected. A simple palette is preferred.

4. Building's colors and materials should harmonize with the surrounding properties, natural colors in order to blend in with the setting. They should incorporate monochromatic color schemes highlighted by

limited use of accent colors in the inlays, wall recesses, trims, reveals, etc.

5. Earthen hue colors integral in the material, such as off-whites, orchres, siennas, umbers, beiges, tans, browns, or other similar subdued colors are encouraged. Darker or non-earthen tone colors should be limited to trim special architectural features or details.

F. Building Support Areas (Storage)

1. Storage areas, trash enclosures and loading docks shall be screened in such a manner as to be obscured from the view of surrounding properties and public right of ways. This should be accomplished, first of all, through good site planning and then incorporating one or all of the following: decorative screen wall, dense plantings, depressed ramps.

2. Areas shall also be designed for the collection of recyclable materials in the anticipation of changing state of local recycling legislation regarding the sorting and collection of such materials.

3. Trash enclosures to be designed to incorporate the color, material and detail of building.

G. Exterior Lighting[4]

Purpose

The Lighting Standards and Guidelines are adopted to allow for attractive and safe illumination within the city through minimal, passive and subtle means that retain the semi-rural ambience of the community. Emphasis shall be given to preserve the character of the existing environment by reducing negative visual impacts to the natural environment, the freeway corridor and residential neighborhoods.

[4] Revisions adopted on November 12, 2003 per Resolution 03-1302.

Guidelines/Standards

1. A detailed, comprehensive lighting plan, prepared by a licensed lighting professional, shall be required for proposed exterior lighting on commercial, industrial, and multi-family zoned properties. Such plans shall include light fixtures details and locations, proposed lighting intensity, color temperature, as well as a photometric plan. A required lighting plan shall also include current energy-efficient fixtures and technology. It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate on the lighting plan that the lighting manufacturer can comply with the City's lighting design requirements. All lighting plans shall be subject to review and approval by the Director of Planning and Community Development and/or the Planning Commission, and shall comply with the requirements of the Building and Safety Department, including permit issuance. The Director's decision can be appealed to the Planning Commission, and the Planning Commission's decision can be appealed to the City Council, subject to compliance with the City filing requirements for an appeal application. Maintenance of approved light fixtures and light sources shall be done in accordance with the approved lighting plan.

2. Exterior lighting shall be sensitive to the character of the surrounding neighborhood to reduce negative visual impacts and glare onto residential neighborhoods, the freeway corridor, and public areas. Proximity to hillside areas, park land, rural or other similar areas will also require increased sensitivity to use exterior lighting. Areas of sensitivity may require more subtle lighting. Illumination levels shall not exceed one (1) footcandle at the property lines, measure at ground level. However, pedestrian areas and areas near the building that are accessible to the public and not clearly visible from the street or parking lot should be appropriately illuminated for public safety.

3. Lighting fixtures shall be designed or selected to be compatible with the architectural style of the project. All lights must be shielded to avoid glare and light spillover onto adjacent properties, the natural environment and onto public right-of-way areas. Indirect lighting sources and lower light standards with concealed fixtures are encouraged. Light fixtures that are directed to the sky or that are not shielded from the pedestrian view are prohibited. The individual light sources shall be completely screened from residential neighborhoods.

4. Side wall-mounted lights and roof-mounted lights on retail buildings are discouraged, but may be allowed in limited circumstances and

shall be subject to the review and approval by the Director of Planning and Community Development or the Planning Commission. The intent of such lights shall not be for the purpose of increased night time building visibility but instead to create architectural ambience by focusing low level lighting on unique or key architectural elements of the buildings, or be directed toward adjacent areas of pedestrian interest, including building entry areas, pathways, oak trees, etc. Lighting from commercial businesses, particularly roof lights, shall be designed so as not to be visible from nearby residences.

5. Roof-mounted lights are prohibited on non-retail buildings. Side wall-mounted lights are allowed if directed solely toward adjacent areas of pedestrian interest, including building entry areas, pathways, oak trees, etc.

6. String lights (including Tivoli lights and the like) and ground-mounted lights that are visible form the public right-of-way are discouraged but may be allowed on retail/commercial property only if reviewed and approved by the Director of Planning and Community Development or the Planning Commission, provided that such lighting is not intended to increase nighttime visibility of the building but instead to create a twilight ambience. Landscape illumination shall be done with low level, unobtrusive fixtures and limited to areas of significant landscape resources such as oak trees, existing mature trees, etc. String lights may be displayed in landscape areas, areas of public gathering (i.e. outdoor dining areas and courtyards), and on buildings if included on the required lighting plan prepared by a licensed lighting professional. String lights located on an oak tree shall be subject to approval of an Oak tree permit. String lights displayed in areas not visible from the public street or adjacent residential neighborhoods shall not be subject to the City's review of a lighting plan. String lights shall not flash, twinkle, oscillate, or scintillate.

7. Lights that are directed at signage, or used as signage, are prohibited unless they are otherwise approved with a sign permit. Lights shall not serve as a means to attract motorists, nor shall they distract motorists.

8. Parking lot lighting shall be designed or selected to compliment the architecture of the building, and provide the minimum safe lighting levels. The required parking lot lighting plan shall be prepared with an understanding of the business hours of operation, as well as the intention to minimize lighting levels when the building is not

occupied. The required lighting plan shall also include existing and required street lamps located in the immediate vicinity of the site and shall prevent spillover onto adjacent properties by the use of shielding or other means of illumination control.

9. Holiday lights that do not create glare or distract motorists are allowed to be displayed from November 15th through January 15th without review by the City. Holiday light displays during any other time of year are prohibited, unless an exterior lighting plan is otherwise approved. String lights shall not flash, twinkle, oscillate, or scintillate.

H. Mechanical Equipment Screening/Roof Design

1. Roof design elements should be applied equally around all sides of the building. Line-of-sight studies are required in order to determine potential visual access to roof mounted equipment from adjoining properties or public right of ways. The following principles should be incorporated where appropriate:

   a. Provide a combination of pitched and flat roof elements, with overhangs, which respond to solar orientation.

   b. Partial mansard roofs are prohibited. Full roofs are strongly encouraged. (See Figure 32A &32B).

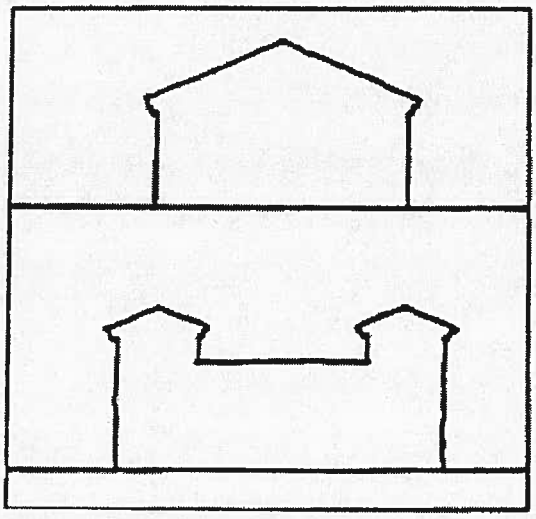


Figure 32A. (YES)

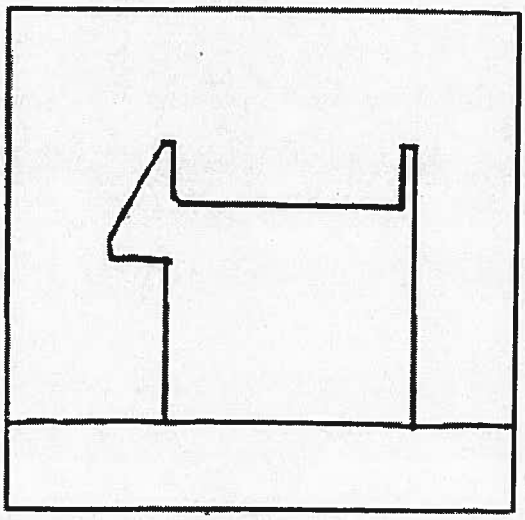


Figure 32B. (NO)

c. Flat roof sections shall be covered with a color-coordinated crushed rock or other material to match the color of the roof material itself or adjacent walls.

d. All roof mounted equipment and appurtenances must be placed so as to be totally, obscured from view. If roof mounted equipment is unavoidable, and roof structure used to screen equipment must be made an integral part of the roof design and shall be shown on all elevations submitted for Planning Commission and Council review. (See Figure 33).

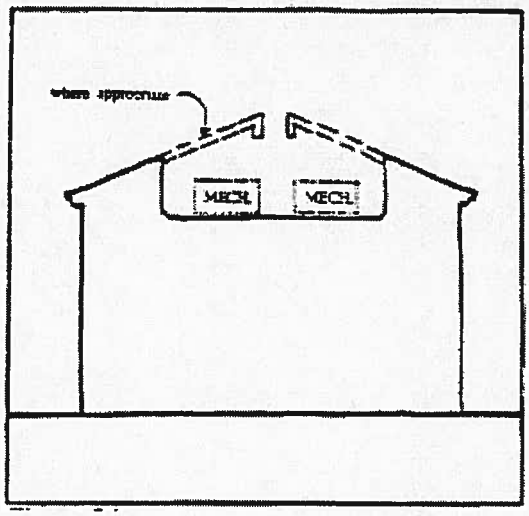


Figure 33.

e. Tile roofing materials are encouraged and should be consistent with the majority of existing tile roof treatments in the City. Roof treatments should be chosen with the intent of achieving compatibility with the roof treatments of adjacent properties, providing adjacent roof treatments are in accordance with the City standards.

f. Roofing materials other than clay and/or concrete roof tile may be appropriate in situations where a building is designed on a hillsides or other unique topography. This will potentially reduce the visual intrusion and contrast of the new structure to its surroundings.

g. Exterior roof access ladders are expressly prohibited. Instead access to the roof shall be provided from within the building.

h. Composition, cedar shakes and metallic roofs are discouraged.

IV. Human Equation

A. Site Design

Provide design elements that invite the participation and interaction of pedestrians in the development site, particularly in planned commercial developments and shopping centers, to include[5]:

1. Outdoor Areas. Adequate outdoor seating and gathering places for employees, visitors and others to encourage social and business activity, such as atriums, plazas, courtyards, steps, expanded sidewalks, benches, and tables and chairs for outdoor dining, with amenities like fountains and other water features, trellises, well-designed and integrated trash receptacles, special landscape design elements and features, and other art and design elements, including Art in Public Places per Section 9659 of the Zoning Ordinance. Outdoor seating and gathering places should be sited where shade features (e.g., awnings, trellises, landscaping) can be utilized in combination with sunlit and non-shaded areas.

2. Internal Pedestrian Circulation. Provide clearly demarcated pedestrian linkages between buildings on the same site and from the buildings to the parking areas onsite to provide an attractive, convenient and safe pedestrian experience. The pedestrian linkages should reflect a high quality of design, integrated into the architectural theme of the buildings and site, and should include some or all of the following, as appropriate: special paving treatments (e.g., tiles, pavers, decorative concrete); related design amenities using natural materials to the extent feasible (e.g., low lying decorative walls or fences, trellises, arbors, special landscaping to include potted plants, vines, etc.); and common wayfinding signage that is consistent with the architectural theme of the development and that is clear, concise and efficient in conveying information. Low intensity pedestrian level lighting may be incorporated into the pedestrian linkages, as needed, consistent with the Lighting Standard Amendments to these Architectural Design Standards and Guidelines.

B. Connection to Surrounding Neighborhoods

Where appropriate and feasible, provide pedestrian paths between adjacent sites and districts to provide better access, promote walking and minimize

[5] Revisions adopted on October 12, 2011 per Resolution No. 11-1651.

vehicle use. Pedestrian pathways are especially encouraged where residential areas/shopping centers, residential areas/office complexes, and shopping centers/office complexes abut each other, and where two or more shopping centers are adjacent to one another. Where feasible and appropriate, the pedestrian paths should incorporate the items described in Item A.2., above. In some cases, however, especially in residential areas and connections to open space areas, the paths, or portions of the paths, may be more informal and less developed in appearance, and consist of natural materials (e.g., decomposed granite, split-rail fencing, less prominent lighting fixtures).

V. Neighborhood Compatibility Guidelines

The following guidelines are intended to ensure that new homes or additions to existing homes are harmonious with and enhance the surrounding neighborhood character. These guidelines are intended to apply to all houses except in Old Agoura. Houses in Old Agoura are subject to separate guidelines found in Section VI. Neighborhoods that were constructed as part of a residential tract or by the same builder generally have common features, such as similar lot sizes, setbacks, architectural styles and details. To meet the intent of the Neighborhood Compatibility Standards, a new or modified structure should be designed so that it is similar to the neighboring structures[6].

For purposes of these Guidelines, "neighborhood character" means a combination of unique features that make up a distinct character of a given neighborhood including but not limited to the following: architectural style, mass and bulk, height number of stories, and roof design, scale orientation, setbacks, open space, architecture style, texture, color and building materials.

1. Early Neighbor Notification. Applicants are encouraged to notify owners of property located within 100 feet of the property and any homeowners' association within 30 days of application submittal.

2. Setbacks. The minimum front yard setback should be equal to the average of the front yards of existing buildings within the block face.

3. Heights. Building heights should be compatible with the size of a lot, as well as the context of the surrounding neighborhood. The height of a structure should be compatible with the established building heights in the neighborhood.

4. Roof Pitch. Roof lines influence the overall mass and scale of a structure. Low to medium roof pitch should be provided with a minimum number of hips and valleys.

[6] Revisions adopted on January 14th, 2009 per Resolution No. 09-1513.

5. Plate Height. Tall plate heights unnecessarily add to the volume of a structure. Eight foot plate heights, the most common for single family homes, are encouraged.

6. Eaves. Adjusting the height of an eave may be used to lower the mass and scale of a structure by lowering the building plate.

7. Second Story Wall Height. Second story wall heights greater than six feet, as measured from the second story finished floor, should have building wall offsets to help articulate second story mass. The offsets should comprise the full height of the wall plane.

8. Entry Feature Height. The height of entry features should match the height of eaves in the neighborhood so not to create an overwhelming entry feature.

9. Second Story Decks. New or expanded second story decks or balconies with views into neighboring residential side or rear yards should address privacy protection to the greatest extent possible. The Director may refer second story decks or balconies to the Planning Commission if issues of privacy are present.

10. Second Story Design. Special sensitivity must be shown in the design of two story homes and additions, as they have a greater visual impact on the neighborhood. The construction of two-story buildings or additions can be compatible provided the design incorporates features which reduce the visual prominence of the second floor. Design features which generally reduce visual prominence include:

    - Provision of second floor offsets to avoid an unrelieved two-story wall.

    - Placing the second floor towards the back of the house to avoid a two-story profile at the street.

    - Placing the second floor in the middle of the footprint to provide a one-story transition to adjacent homes.

    - Where appropriate to the architectural style, consider architectural features that indicate where a first story ends and a second story begins when the structure is viewed from the street. Examples of appropriate floor delineations for some architectural styles include adding rooflines.

    - Where appropriate, some portions of the second story roof should be brought down to the gutter or eave line of the first story roof to reduce the apparent volume of the building.

- First and second floor plate heights should be consistent with those established on other homes in the neighborhood.

- Long, uninterrupted side walls should be avoided. Second stories should be setback further from the side property line than the first floor.

- Windows on side elevations should have window and sill heights high enough to mitigate intrusion into a neighbor's privacy.

VI. Old Agoura Design Guidelines

The goal of the Old Agoura Design Guidelines is to encourage the design of a home and an environment that is rural in its roots. Even the most contemporary of homes can feature elements that are rural and which pay homage to classic and historic styles. Looking to the past provides insight and inspiration for future development in Old Agoura[7].

The character of historic Agoura can be preserved through development and design that reflect the original quality of life. When beginning plans to build or remodel in Old Agoura, the following goals should be incorporated.

1. Preserve existing hills by situating buildings to use the existing contours of the land, incorporate surrounding oak trees and creeks, and minimize grading and destruction of the natural landscape and view sheds; conform to the land, not impose upon it.

2. Integrate into the surrounding neighborhood, considering compatible scale, style, color, and feel.

3. Respect Old Agoura's history and create architecture that incorporates both the essence of the historical periods of the area and the designs dictated by the local climate.

4. Use natural and traditional materials with an emphasis on excellent design and detail.

5. Use of eco-friendly design including the use of green building materials and energy efficient lighting, heating and cooling systems.

6. Design or preserve horse keeping areas so that the land is made untenable for horses.

[7] Revisions adopted on January 14th, 2009 per Resolution No. 09-1513.

Home designs should use materials and forms that reflect the semi-rural character of the area and its climate in order to create places intimately connected with nature. Imitation of non-indigenous styles that are closely identified with other geographics is discouraged.

The following are design guidelines for new development and remodels in Old Agoura:

Maintain Neighborhood Scale

A new or remodeled home should not be out of proportion with adjacent houses. A home should be designed to fit the lot and surroundings and with internal design integrity. To help define an acceptable buildable area for each lot, the following Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and Slope Density charts were developed. The FAR is intended to guide the structure's size based on the lot size and slope. The charts are designed to preserve the character of Old Agoura's existing neighborhood by ensuring that new and remodeled homes are compatible and appropriate in scale and bulk with the existing neighborhood.

Table 1 and Table 2 below set forth the recommended maximum size of a new single family home or remodel of an existing single family home including the garage and any attached structures with less than 50% open lattice covering.

Lofts and mezzanines are included in the calculation of floor area. Fractions of .5 or larger should be rounded to the nearest whole number. For the purposes of these Guidelines, a remodel is defined as a project that does not meet the threshold for an administrative site plan review as defined in Section 9233.8 of the Zoning Code.

The maximum size of any single family dwelling including any habitable accessory structures, regardless of lot size, should not exceed 8,000 square feet.

Table 1 – Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Lot Size	Maximum Allowed Structure Size
10,000 square feet or less	.2 multiplied by the lot area
10,001 to 20,000 square feet	2,000 square feet plus .2 multiplied by the lot area over 10,001 square feet
20,001 to 40,000 square feet	4,000 square feet plus .06 multiplied by the lot area over 20,001 square feet
40,001 to 80,000 square feet	5,200 square feet plus .02 multiplied by the lot area over 40,001 square feet
80,001 to 90,000 square feet	6,000 square feet plus .03 multiplied the lot area over 80,001 square feet
90,001 to 130,000 square feet	6,300 square feet plus .009 multiplied the lot area over 90,001 square feet
130,001 and above	6,660 square feet plus .012 multiplied the lot area over 130,001 square feet

Exemptions from FAR calculations:

a. Space for a three car garage (230 square feet per space up to a maximum of 690 square feet for a single-family residence).

b. Attic space under six feet in height.

c. A basement with no exposed sides in which the finished floor of the level above the basement level, at any point, is not more than three feet above adjacent natural or finished grade, whichever is lower. Such floor area may abut light wells which may occupy not more than forty percent (40%) of the lineal perimeter of that level of the building.

d. Roofed porches attached to the primary residence, and facing the street, with no enclosure between the height of three feet and seven feet except for the building face to which it is attached.

e. Unclosed roofed structures for the keeping or maintaining of horses up to three hundred (300 square feet in area and one detached one story barn for the keeping or maintaining of horses up to five hundred seventy six (576) square feet in area.

The following slope factor table was developed to address hillside lots. The slope factor table further reduces the size of the house based on the slope of the parcel. Once the maximum size of the house has been determined using the FAR table (Table 1 above), that number is then multiplied by the related slope factor and the resulting number represents the maximum square footage allowed for the structure.

As average lot slope increases, allowable floor area is lowered per Table 2 below. Fractions of .5 or over are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 2 - Slope Factor as Related to Average Slope

% Slope	Slope Factor	% Slope	Slope Factor
15 or less	1.00	31	0.78
16	0.99	32	0.76
17	0.98	33	0.73
18	0.97	34	0.70
19	0.96	35	0.67
20	0.95	36	0.64
21	0.94	37	0.60
22	0.93	38	0.57
23	0.92	39	0.54
24	0.91	40	0.50
25	0.90	41	0.45
26	0.88	42	0.40
27	0.86	43	0.35
28	0.84	44	0.30
29	0.82	45+	0.20
30	0.80		

It should be noted the established square footages represent the maximum recommended not the minimum recommended FAR. The established FAR may need to be reduced if special circumstances exist of the lot that would reduce the actual buildable area of the lot. These special circumstances could include but are not limited to flood zones and irregular shaped lots.

Height

Although the Zoning Code allows up to 35 feet in height for single family homes, homes should be designed to be compatible with the size of the lot, as well as the context of the surrounding neighborhood. Appropriate building heights may vary from site to site in order to be compatible with the established building heights in the area.

Tall plate heights (over ten feet) that unnecessarily add to the volume of a structure should be avoided. Eight foot plate heights, the most common for single family homes, are encouraged. Where appropriate to the architectural style, architectural features that delineate where a first story ends and a second story begins when the structure is viewed from the street should be considered.

Horse Keeping

The following are suggested standards for horse keeping. Details for minimum horse-keeping facilities per horse would consist of a 12 ft x 12 ft stall or shelter (or 144 square ft with a 10 ft minimum interior clearance) and a basic pipe corral paddock, minimum size 12 ft x 24 ft. However, for the large majority of horses that are not worked daily, a minimum 24 ft x 48 ft turnout should be provided, with length for running and kicking up their heels. Larger or multiple turnouts should be planned if more animals are on a property. High use areas should be located on higher ground away from streams, with a 1-2% minimum slope for drainage. Paddocks should have sand or gravel substrate for filtration and not be built on areas with a greater than 10% slope. For pasture areas, avoid steep slopes that are susceptible to erosion; geologists recommend that horse facilities, including barns, turnouts and pasture, not be placed on areas over 10% because of potential slope failure.

A good reference book for best management practices related to runoff from horse keeping areas is "Stable and Horse Management in the Santa Monica Mountains, A Manual on Best Management Practices for the Reduction of Non-point Source Pollution." A copy is available for viewing at the City's public counter.

Access for feed delivery and manure management should be as close to the street as possible, with separate entry gates if needed. A plan for horse keeping facilities should include an area for hay & manure storage, accessory areas, such as horse trailer storage, wash racks, tack rooms, tools, etc. Some items found on site may serve multiple functions, such as septic tanks and leach fields being located under corral or pasture areas. Access can also be solved via turnout areas with wide gates. Barns may be used as storage for an owner who does not intend to keep horses, but future owners should maintain the area so it is convertible. Landscaping such as, but not limited to trees, vineyards, and trellises, should not be placed so as to prevent future conversion to horse keeping areas.

Site Design

Site design should respect the natural features of the site including landforms and trees. Existing natural features, such as a creek or large tree, can provide a special challenge but also opportunities for creative solutions.

Oak Tree Preservation

The existence of oak trees adds to the character of the house as well as to the Old Agoura community as a whole. The City's oak tree ordinance sets forth carefully crafted rules to preserve oak trees and mitigate the loss of oaks. A copy of the ordinance is available from the City.

Minimize lot coverage

The design of a home need not maximize the allowable lot coverage. It should provide ample open space around a structure. The relative placement of horse

keeping areas, house, garage, accessory structures and driveway play a major role in shaping the character of a house. Consideration should also be given to the existing structures and views of the neighbors.

Style

The visual mass of a structure should be reduced with deliberate architectural elements. With the use of windows, porches, balconies, trellises, and terraces help create free-flowing space to the outdoors. Preferred basic features include:

- Wrap-around porches, balconies;
- Rear or side yard-facing garage doors or detached garages;
- Front door or entryway distinctly visible from the road giving a sense of human scale;
- Generous roof overhang (where appropriate to architectural style);
- Use of natural materials such as wood and stone.

When creating architectural details, and especially when utilizing the technology of stone veneer, it is important that they be used in a manner that is honest in their application and consistent with their function in construction technique.

Roofs

Roofs should have variation in texture. Roof overhangs of good proportion and balance provide a fundamental appeal as well as respect for the local climate. Excessively steep roof pitch is discouraged.

Color

Bright colors and reflective surfaces are strongly discouraged. Dominant exterior colors that are warm, rich and reflect natural regional earth tones are preferred.

Hardscape & Driveways

Colors and textures should be chosen to best approximate the natural environment of the homesite. Permeable and semi-permeable surfaces should be installed whenever possible and the amount of paving should be kept to a minimum. In order to reduce runoff and augment ground water recharging use of as much porous material as possible is encouraged. Preferred materials are:

- Decomposed granite or other natural appearing aggregates such as gravel
- Natural flat stone
- Interlocking concrete manufactured pavers
- Grasscrete to reduce the hardscape ratio

If concrete is used, bring out its more natural looking applications by using:

- Stained or stamped concrete
- Exposed aggregate concrete

While the use of asphalt is generally discouraged, a better application is "chip seal," where loose rock is pressed into the surface to provide a gravel look.

Storm Water Drainage

There are very stringent and well-defined laws dealing with water drainage. Basically, the natural or traditional path of water across their property cannot be altered without a legally approved engineering plan.

Fences

Unfenced front yards help promote openness in Old Agoura. If fencing is proposed, white or natural wood, equestrian style fencing is recommended in all yard areas visible from the road. The use of wrought iron with sharp-pointed posts or stakes is discouraged, as is the use of chain link fencing.

Landscape Areas

Landscape plants should be selected with wildfire fuel modification, water conservation, and summer heat and winter cold snaps in mind. Old Agoura has a number of microclimates and frost sensitive trees and plants may be severely damaged during the cold spells, especially in the lowlands along creek beds. The use of native plants is encouraged.

Native California heritage trees should be preserved in place whenever possible and incorporated into the project design.

Outdoor Lighting

All outdoor lighting should be the minimum intensity possible for the task required. All lighting should be non-blinding, indirect, or diffused. All lights should be *off* unless they are being used. Motion sensor switches function well for this purpose.

The source of light in any light fixture, i.e., the bulb or other source of indirect illumination, should not be visible off-site. All light fixtures should be selected for their ability to focus light on the feature (i.e. step, path, entry) to be lighted and to have minimum light spillage.

Zoning Ordinance

In addition to the above Old Agoura Design Guidelines, please refer to the Zoning Ordinance for requirements for each zone (RV, RL, RS, RM, RMH and RH) as well as the Equestrian Overlay (EQ) and Old Agoura Overlay (OA).

VII. Planned Office and Manufacturing District Design Guidelines

The goal of the Planned Office and Manufacturing (POM) District Design Guidelines is to assure the high quality development of a mix of land uses that are cohesive and reflect a distinct district identity. The following additional guidelines are intended to achieve this goal. The design guidelines supplement the other provisions of the City's *Architectural Design Standards and Guidelines*, and the zoning standards.

A. Site Planning and Design

- The design of new development is sensitive to the characteristics of the existing surrounding development and shall take into consideration the existing natural site constraints.

- Site layouts and buildings are designed to provide interesting street scenes; attractive, inviting pedestrian-scale features, open spaces and amenities; and well-screened outdoor storage, loading areas, and equipment and service areas that are designed as an integral part of the site design or building, consistent with the building architecture.

- New development enhances the character of its surrounding area through quality architecture, landscaping, and appropriate site arrangement, and a high level of urban design that is of a "human," not "monumental," scale. Development respects that of the immediate area through the use of complimentary building arrangements and buffers.

- There is an appropriate transition between projects with different uses and different intensities on the same or adjacent parcels to provide an effective visual and functional shift. Transition may be created through appropriate building setback, height, landscape buffers, building orientation and massing, and overall site organization. In multi-building complexes, a distinct visual link shall be established among various buildings through architecture and by using site design elements like courtyards, plazas, landscaping, and walkways to unify the project.

- Entry drive orientation and accent landscaping are used to enhance/identify entry sequence. The entry drive is oriented toward the main entrance of the building. Signs, paving and planting are incorporated into a well-designed site entry to visually link it to the buildings.

- Outdoor plazas, patios, courtyards, or other enhanced site features are provided at the building entries, with tables, benches or seat walls, potted plants, trash receptacles and enhanced paving.

- Entry driveways, loading/unloading areas, internal vehicle circulation, placement of structures on a lot, landscaped areas, pedestrian pathways or sidewalks, and pedestrian amenities, such as outdoor gathering areas, are aligned with, and complement that of, adjacent parcels to the extent feasible so as to create a continuous network, while maintaining privacy for residential units and the common open space for residents, if part of the project.

- The siting of buildings considers energy efficiency, with building orientation and landscape material selected to provide the maximum energy efficiency for the building.

B. Building Design

- Buildings exhibit a high architectural quality that includes building entry accentuation; both vertical and horizontal articulation, including changes in the wall plane, use of openings and projections, and material and color variation; stepped building heights for multi-story buildings; stepped wall planes to break up long, flat façades; and architectural elements, such as overhangs, trellises, projections, awnings, and/or insets, to create shadow patterns that contribute to a building's character.

- Roof forms and planes are varied to create visual interest and to define the building edge. Roof forms are designed to completely screen roof-mounted equipment from public view through parapets, roof screens or equipment wells that are constructed consistent with the building materials and integral to the architecture.

- Predominantly natural and warm color palettes and materials are employed, and large expanses of glass and highly reflective materials are discouraged.

- Roof materials that minimize heat absorption are recommended, as are colors that reduce sun glare on wall planes and materials that reduce the transfer of heat into and/or out of the building, as feasible.

C. Circulation

- Figure 34 *Planned Office and Manufacturing District Conceptual Exhibit – Circulation Network* is the proposed vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian plan for the district. The plan identifies road improvements, and sidewalks and pedestrian paths, to promote pedestrian activity. On-street parking is

encouraged along Roadside Road, and private shared driveways encouraged throughout for greater access to parcels and future developments internally within the district.

- Safe, convenient, and visually attractive access is provided to the building entry from the street, sidewalk, parking areas, and other onsite buildings; and between adjoining parcels and developments to create connectivity within the district, and to areas outside of, but adjacent to, the district.

- Shared driveway access between adjoining properties is encouraged for continuity and cohesiveness.

D. Parking

- Shared parking among adjoining properties is encouraged, consistent with section 9654 of the Agoura Hills Municipal Code, and with the preparation of a professional shared parking study acceptable to the City.

- To avoid large expanses of paved areas and to provide easy accessibility to buildings, large parking lots are divided into smaller parking areas and dispersed around the site, as feasible. Where larger parking lots are needed, such lots are designed with pedestrian and landscaping features, including but not limited to, seating areas, trellises, decorative walkways and plazas and other amenities to break up the appearance of the paved areas and to provide a comfortable place for pedestrians to walk.

- Long rows in parking areas are divided up with landscaping islands, other landscaping and pedestrian amenities, and buildings where feasible.

- Bike racks and other public bike storage are provided in convenient locations onsite, and are well-integrated within the overall site design and compatible with the building architecture.

E. Pedestrian Amenities

- Onsite walkways link parking areas and public outdoor activity areas to each other as well as to the building(s), and are linked to the public sidewalk system.

- Trellises, arbors and other shade structures are provided for pedestrian areas, particularly those within parking lots.

- Pedestrian paths are defined by landscaping, low-level lighting, and special paving colors, materials or patterns to define such access ways onsite.

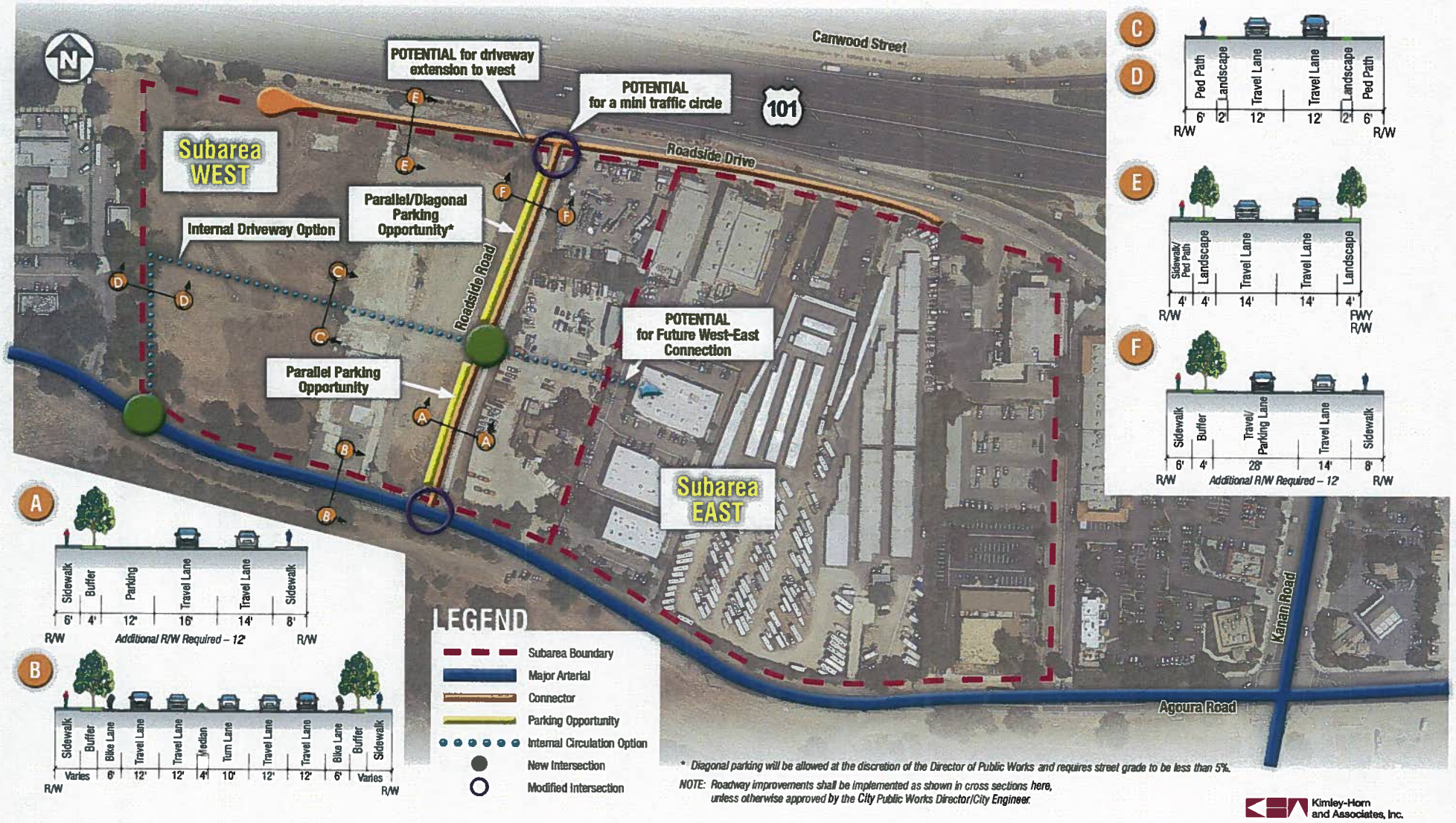
- Site furniture and fixtures, such as planters, lighting, arbors, trellises, tree grates, benches and mail boxes are incorporated into the design landscape. Such elements follow the same design concept as the major structures on site.

- Adequate outdoor seating and gathering places are provided for employees, visitors and others to encourage social and business activity. These may include atriums, plazas, courtyards, patios, expanded sidewalks and seating areas with special aesthetic treatments like water and art features and decorative materials. Where feasible, such places are sited where shade features (e.g., awnings, trellises, landscaping) can be utilized in sunlit areas.

Figure 34

Planned Office and Manufacturing District

CONCEPTUAL EXHIBIT – Circulation Network



* Diagonal parking will be allowed at the discretion of the Director of Public Works and requires street grade to be less than 5%.

NOTE: Roadway improvements shall be implemented as shown in cross sections here, unless otherwise approved by the City Public Works Director/City Engineer.

Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

VIII. Mixed Use Overlay District Design Guidelines

The goal of the Mixed Use Overlay (MXD) District Design Guidelines is to assure the high quality development of multi-family residential mixed-use developments. The following additional guidelines are intended to achieve this goal. The design guidelines supplement the other provisions of the City's *Architectural Design Standards and Guidelines*, and the zoning standards.

- Multi-family residential units are part of a well-integrated vertically or horizontally residential mixed-use project.

- Live/work units are encouraged.

- Attractive and smooth transition is provided between the solely commercial and light manufacturing uses within the district and residential mixed-use developments. Adequate and well-designed buffers and screening, including walls, fencing and/or landscaping, are employed to minimize the effects of any incompatible uses or activities, while still providing vehicular and pedestrian connectivity to the mixed-use development from adjacent parcels.

- The residential and non-residential components of a residential mixed-use development are compatible; not posing undue conflicts in types of activities; and designed for a high level of privacy and safety for residents, including separate residential entrances, separate access, fire suppression barriers, separate resident parking, and noise insulation.

- The ground floor of a vertical residential mixed-use building and the non-residential component of a horizontal mixed-use development along primary street frontages and public sidewalks and plazas are designed to engage pedestrians.

- Residential carports, detached garages and accessory structures are architecturally integrated into the overall design of the project with similar materials and details as the residences.

IX. Administration Procedures/Summary

The Development Application Flow Chart outlines the typical steps involved in the Agoura Hills development application procedures. The pre-application process is optional but highly recommended for all large projects. This process affords the opportunity for the applicant to obtain input from staff and the ARP on the project prior to submitting the official application.

It is also recommended that for large or controversial projects, the applicant conduct community meetings with the neighbors prior to making application with the City.

The ARP is not a discretionary decision making body. Its role is to provide professional design recommendations to the Planning staff, Planning Commission and City Council. Nonetheless, the ARP's recommendations are highly valued by the Planning Commission and City Council. Thus, it would behoove the applicant to obtain a favorable recommendation by the ARP on a project. Applicants are encouraged to consult with the Planning Department Staff and/or review all pertinent sections of the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan prior to commencement of schematic design.

If a conflict arises between the Zoning Ordinance and the standards contained herein, the Director of Planning and Community Development shall render a decision as to what document's standards shall govern. The Director of Planning and Community Development shall also be responsible for making interpretation of the standards.

X. Development Application Flow Chart

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION FLOW CHART