
MEMO

DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 2009
TO: PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: PLANNING DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: REVIEW OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

BACKGROUND:

The City Council established the Architecture & Design Commission to establish Design Guidelines, and act as an appeal board after the approval of the Guidelines.

MISSION STATEMENT:

“To establish standards for ALL DEVELOPMENT by implementing quality design for timeless architecture that enhances the community’s image, pride and quality of life.”

PURPOSE:

The design guidelines provide the basis to achieve quality design for all development within the City of Lancaster. The design guidelines are intended for new construction, redevelopment and renovation of existing facilities, unless the construction is under the control of a Specific Plan where site specific standards take precedent. The Guidelines are designed for a variety of user groups including property owners, developers, design professionals, staff, the Architectural Design Planning Commission, and the City Council, to use in evaluating whether development projects meet the design goals of the City of Lancaster.

This document goes beyond architectural design to encompass a comprehensive treatment of the built environment and quality urban design. The intent of these Guidelines is to provide for an attractive and unique image for the community by creating a walkable, sustainable, cohesive and enduring built environment. This is achieved by improving land use compatibility, street and neighborhood character, community form and overall community design. The Guidelines offer implementation methods in site planning, building architecture, and building placement, for consistent designs to create sense of place and quality design. Each development is intended to contribute to the form and quality of life

and to improve the City's visual identity by utilizing design standards for a more sustainable, livable Lancaster.

This document provides clear expectations and implements General Plan Policy 19.1.1, which states: "Develop and apply a comprehensive set of community design standards and guidelines in conformance with the goals, objectives, policies and action programs contained in the Community Design subsection of the Plan for Physical Development." The design guidelines are intrinsically tied to the policies of the General Plan, which is the constitution for physical development.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION:

The Guidelines are organized into sections by type of development. **ALL DEVELOPMENT** is the first and largest in these sections and includes those guidelines that generally apply to all types of development. This is followed by guidelines for more specific development categories such as **SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, MIXED-USE** and **INDUSTRIAL**. Each Section is further divided into two categories, Site Design and Building Architecture Form and Character. Each guideline contains an Intent statement which describes the desired outcome. Graphic illustrations and diagrams have been added to suggest *solutions*. Included are solutions that respect and enhance our Antelope Valley resources.

PROCEDURES:

A small change in the application process has been added to require a preliminary review step in order to expedite discussion and review of the project design. The application has also been modified to add a design checklist to ensure that development projects meet the design goals of the City of Lancaster. Development applications can be located on the City's webpage at <http://www.cityoflancasterca.org>. under "Planning Documents."

SRD