

**STAFF REPORT**  
**City of Lancaster, California**

NB 4
06/23/09
MVB

Date: June 23, 2009

To: Mayor Parris and City Council Members

From: Brian S. Ludicke, Planning Director

Subject: **Architectural and Design Planning Commission Update**

---

**Recommendation:**

Appropriate \$50,000 from the Operating Contingency Account No. 101-4330999 to Account No. 101-4520301 for professional services to assist in final compilation and publication of the City's design guidelines.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The Operating Contingency has a balance of \$145,000.00. This action will leave a remaining balance of \$95,000.00 which will roll into the general fund balance at year end.

**Accomplishments:**

At the June 9, 2009, City Council meeting, staff was directed to provide a status/update of the Architectural and Design Commission and when the Council can expect to see some substantial improved changes in the way that building takes place.

Accomplishments of the Architectural and Design Commission (ADC) to date include education and training to understand and comprehend architectural design concepts; creation of a mission statement; review of various design guideline templates, including those from Santa Clarita, Tucson, and Temecula; attendance at various fieldtrips (design tours) on days beyond regular ADC meeting times; and the decision to use Tucson guidelines as a template for the creation of Lancaster's design guidelines. A more detailed list is included as Exhibit "A".

The ADC made the decision to use Tucson's guidelines as the template for the City of Lancaster Design Guidelines. From the end users' perspective, it is clear and easy to understand. It references the General Plan policy to support the formulated guidelines, making it more enforceable. The guidelines are formatted in a way that is user-friendly, and contains superior development standards that will add value to the community as a whole and improve quality of life. The ADC also reviewed the "Broadening Horizon Document," as drafted by a previous ad hoc committee consisting of various community representatives, to ensure that their ideas were included in the "All Development Section" of the template.

The Guidelines are primarily organized into sections by “Type of Development,” each of which includes intent, references to General Plan policies and solutions, which details specific guidelines. The Commissioners have reviewed the “All Development Section,” including the Intent section, and will begin the process of adding references, solutions, and illustrations. They will also look to identify opportunities for sustainable development. It is the Commissioners’ intent to have a draft of the Architectural and Design Guidelines available in October and before the Council on December 8, 2009.

Upon completion of the Architectural and Design Guidelines, review of architectural design for all projects will be evident. In the meantime, staff considers and makes recommendations to enhance commercial and industrial elevations with project review. Although the ADC’s main responsibilities are to design the Guidelines and act as an arbitration board, elevations for two separate projects have already been placed before the Architectural and Design Commissioners for their consideration and comments. Staff will take the recommendations to the applicants to enhance the design of the proposed projects.

Due to the slowdown in residential development, the ADC has not had the opportunity to comment on architecture for new residential projects. The ability to modify the design of residential projects will be in effect when the Architectural and Design Guidelines are approved by Council.

#### **Projected Actions/Dates**

The ADC has several critical items that must be completed in the next three months to ensure consideration of a final set of design guidelines by the Council in December 2009. As noted in Exhibit “A”, these actions include reviewing and finalizing commercial, retail, and industrial guidelines by mid-August, with a publication of the entire draft set of guidelines by mid-September. The ADC will make final reviews and changes to this document with the objective of distributing the draft for stakeholder and public review on October 1. It is the intent of the ADC to make a formal recommendation on the design guidelines by November 13, 2009.

The schedule outlined is ambitious, and the ADC has committed to multiple monthly meetings to accomplish it. Staff believes, however, that additional professional assistance is needed, particularly in creating the final graphic layouts for and publication of the design guidelines document. Therefore, staff is recommending that an appropriation of \$50,000.00 be made as noted in the recommendation portion of the staff report to cover projected maximum costs of such assistance.

SRD:BSL/jr

#### **Attachment:**

Exhibit “A” – Outline of ADC Accomplishments and Goals