



## DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING RECOMMENDATION REPORT



### Los Angeles City Planning Commission

**Case No.:** CPC-2010-714-MSC  
**CEQA No.:** ENV-2010-715-ND

**Date:** June 9, 2011  
**Time:** After 8:30 a.m.\*  
**Place:** Public Works Board Room  
City Hall, Room 350  
200 N. Spring Street, Los Angeles, 90012

**Related Cases:** None  
**Council No.:** Citywide  
**Plan Area:** All  
**Specific Plan:** Not Applicable  
**Certified NC:** All  
**GPLU:** All  
**Zone:** All

**Public Hearing:** Required  
**Appeal Status:** Not Applicable  
**Expiration Date:** Not Applicable  
**Approval:** Not Applicable

**Applicant:** City of Los Angeles  
**Representative:** Not Applicable

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Citywide

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** NO DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IS PROPOSED.

The adoption of Citywide Design Guidelines (“Design Guidelines”) by the City Planning Commission is proposed for Multifamily Residential, Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial projects, as an Appendix to the General Plan Framework Element. The purpose of the Design Guidelines is twofold: to implement the design values in the Ten Principles of Urban Design, a part of the Framework Element, on individual projects; and to consolidate basic design guidelines common throughout most Community Plans in one document, allowing individual New Community Plans to address tailored, neighborhood-specific design guidelines.

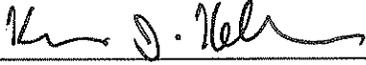
The Design Guidelines will establish design expectations for new development based on Citywide goals, policies and objectives. The Design Guidelines will illustrate ways for individual projects to promote walkability, maintain neighborhood form and character, and promote creative development solutions that balance existing neighborhood character and improve the streetscape experience. The Design Guidelines will apply to all new development proposals and substantial building alterations requiring discretionary approvals from the Department of City Planning. As well, they may also be used by staff in other Departments or community members for advisory review of new development applications.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** Adoption of the Citywide Design Guidelines by the City Planning Commission as an Appendix to the General Plan Framework Element to implement the Ten Principles of Urban Design, under the authority pursuant to LAMC Section 11.5.4. The Citywide Guidelines are an implementation tool as allowed and derived from the General Plan Framework. They are to assist in developing context-sensitive guidelines as part of the locally prepared plans.

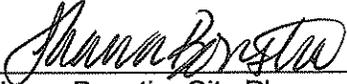
### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

1. **Approve** the Negative Declaration as the environmental clearance on the subject.
2. **Adopt** the attached Findings as part of this project.
3. **Adopt** the Citywide Design Guidelines as an Appendix to the Framework Element of the General Plan

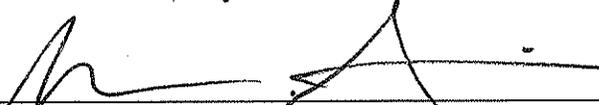
MICHAEL J. LOGRANDE  
Director of Planning



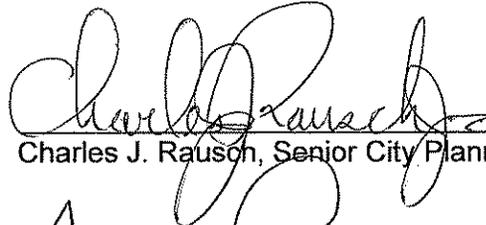
Kevin Keller, Senior City Planner



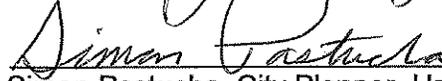
Shana Bonstin, City Planner



Michelle Sorkin, City Planning Associate



Charles J. Rauson, Senior City Planner



Simon Pastucha, City Planner, Urban Design Studio

**ADVICE TO PUBLIC:** \*The exact time this report will be considered during the meeting is uncertain since there may be several other items on the agenda. Written communication may be mailed to the *Commission Secretariat, 200 North Spring Street, Room 532, Los Angeles, CA 90012* (Phone No. 213-978-1300). While all written communications are given to the Commission for consideration, the initial packets are sent a week prior to the Commission's meeting date. If you challenge these agenda items in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing agendized herein, or in written correspondence on these matters delivered to this agency at or prior to the public hearing. As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to this programs, services and activities. Sign language interpreters, assisted listening devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or other services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request no later than 3 working days (72 hrs.) prior to the meeting by calling the Commission Secretariat at (213) 978-1300.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed Citywide Design Guidelines are for Multi Family & Mixed Use, Commercial and Industrial projects. They were initiated as part of the New Community Plan Program in an effort to consolidate the most common, overarching urban design themes and best practices found in the Framework Element, adopted Community Plans, Specific Plans and other overlay districts. The Design Guidelines will help form the justification for approving or disapproving discretionary actions based on design considerations and compliance with the General Plan. It will also establish consistent and specific design expectations for residential, commercial and industrial projects. While applicable to projects throughout the City of Los Angeles, the proposed Design Guidelines have been written taking into account the variety of built forms that exist within the City, from the most concentrated urban centers to our suburban neighborhoods. The Design Guidelines embrace the eclectic and diverse nature of Los Angeles' neighborhoods while at the same time offering clear direction for better design outcomes for a wide variety of architectural styles.

### **The purpose of the Citywide Design Guidelines is to:**

- Communicate to the development community, in advance of an application being filed, the design expectations in residential, commercial and industrial projects;
- Facilitate the fair and consistent application of design objectives;
- Protect investment throughout the City by encouraging consistently high-quality development;
- Encourage projects appropriate to the context of Los Angeles' climate and environment.
- Facilitate safe, functional and attractive development; and
- Foster a sense of community and encourage pride of ownership;

The Planning Department held three public information meetings on the Citywide Design Guidelines, one each in the San Fernando Valley, Downtown and West Los Angeles on August 30 and 31, 2010 with a total attendance of approximately 65 stakeholders. On October 9, 2010, a meeting with Plan Check NC, a consortium of Neighborhood Councils, was held, at which time several Neighborhood Council representatives requested additional time to review and comment on the proposed Citywide Guidelines. Subsequently, Planning staff presented the Design Guidelines at each of the seven Area Planning Commissions between October 12 and November 2, 2010 to give the local communities an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the proposal. Many thoughtful comments on the Draft Guidelines were received and Planning staff has since incorporated many of the suggestions into a newly revised proposal.

The City Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing on June 9, 2011 to consider the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines. The General Plan Framework under Chapter 10–Implementation Program summarized one of the essential principal programs as the establishment of design guidelines to improve the quality of development in the City. If adopted by the City Planning Commission, the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines will be included as an Appendix to the General Plan Framework and will help inform decision-making on incoming discretionary applications. No development is proposed as part of the project. No changes in land use, density or intensity are proposed (please see Exhibit C of this staff report for the Draft Citywide Design Guidelines).

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **BACKGROUND**

In the spirit of the “Do Real Planning” principles adopted by the City Planning Commission in 2007 and the Framework Element which calls for the formulation of citywide development standards, the Citywide Design Guidelines were initiated to establish high standards for design everywhere in Los Angeles and reinforce consistency in the review of discretionary projects by consolidating common design best practices into a user-friendly document. The proposed Citywide Design Guidelines incorporate the Ten Principles of Urban Design and are a means of putting into action, or implementing the Principles on individual development projects that receive discretionary review from the Planning Department.

The need for Citywide Design Guidelines became apparent through the process of developing New Community Plans. The Urban Design Studio and planners working on New Community Plans reviewed existing Community Plans and found that most of the plans contained overlapping guidelines with several older plans having no design guidelines at all. Through the New Community Plan program and in working with a variety of stakeholders across Los Angeles it became clear that consistent design guidelines citywide would benefit all areas of the City, while still allowing individual Community Plans the ability to address specialized local design concerns at the neighborhood level. The Citywide Design Guidelines draw upon common themes and opportunities that present themselves with most new development proposals such as careful site planning to promote better access for a variety of users, attention to existing site conditions and the surrounding environment, maintaining an identifiable neighborhood character and improving it with each new project, providing high quality open space in the public and private realm, and utilizing landscaping to soften and transition edges whenever possible.

The Planning Department was tasked with creating Design Guidelines that address common design objectives applicable to a variety of urban and suburban forms. To ensure the Design Guidelines would be widely used, they were written with a diverse audience in mind and organized in an easy to understand format including photo examples of “recommended” and “not recommended” approaches with words and directional lines to identify specific elements. The Design Guidelines are expected to be used by Department of City Planning staff, staff from other departments, architects and developers, and community stakeholders such as Neighborhood Councils and interested individuals.

The proposed Citywide Design Guidelines will apply to all new developments and substantial building alterations that require discretionary approvals, meaning projects that require review by the Planning Department because they are in certain areas or are requesting special approvals. The Guidelines will apply to discretionary projects everywhere in Los Angeles, excluding projects involving single-family, agricultural, public facilities, open space uses or where there are Specific Plans with adopted guidelines.

### **AREAS OF DISCUSSION**

Many thoughtful comments were received on the Citywide Design Guidelines representing a variety of stakeholders. A majority of comments on individual Design Guidelines have been incorporated into the final draft, attached to this Staff Report as Exhibit C. Below is a summary of the major topics of concern brought forth through written and verbal communication in public meetings.

### ***Why Are Guidelines Necessary?***

Planning staff and community stakeholders have encountered recurring design challenges on multifamily residential, commercial and industrial projects related to concerns about neighborhood compatibility and transitions, the quality of open space, and overall design quality. The lack of basic, established guidelines to set design expectations for proposed projects at an early stage, has resulted in design issues being vetted for the first time toward the end of the public process in public hearings and Commission meetings. Often the project's design has been developed to the extent that there is little opportunity to make modifications, frustrating community stakeholders, Planners, and the project applicant. Therefore, the Planning Department set out to prepare Citywide Design Guidelines to establish clear expectations from the start to ensure that all discretionary projects receive the same high level of design consideration. As explained in the Findings, the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines are an extension of adopted City policies and further articulate the goals and objectives upon which those policies were founded.

Some of the City's more recently adopted Community Plans include an Urban Design chapter with urban design goals, objective, and policies; however, nine out of the 35 adopted Community Plans contain no design guidelines (Exhibit B). For these communities and neighborhoods lacking adopted design guidelines, basic Citywide Design Guidelines can fill in the blanks where Community Plans are silent on certain design issues.

During the Department's ongoing effort to update several Community Plans, staff researched existing plans and found that where design guidelines exist: 1) Many of the guidelines are almost identically restated in each community plan with overlapping themes in what we know to be very diverse communities; and 2) The Design Guidelines in Community Plans, by and large, encompass broad design themes that are general enough to be applied Citywide. Therefore, by culling the Design Guidelines from Community Plans and elevating them to a Citywide level, the guidelines will become more visible and accessible to users. At the same time, having basic Citywide Design Guidelines will allow New Community Plans to become more focused on Design Guidelines for special districts. Urban Design Guidelines found in Community Plans will always override Citywide Guidelines whenever community-level and citywide-level guidelines diverge.

The Sylmar Community Plan, which is currently being updated, illustrates how Citywide Design Guidelines may be used. Sylmar is a suburban community with an established rural, equestrian character. Although most of the Citywide Design Guidelines will apply to Multifamily Residential and Commercial areas within Sylmar, there will be a need for more focused guidelines that address the unique character of the Sylmar community. For example, guidelines requiring equestrian trails in new developments and special transitions in horsekeeping areas may be used. Instead of repeating basic Design Guidelines, the New Community Plan can elaborate on the Citywide Design Guidelines and create more tailored, neighborhood-specific guidelines as needed.

### ***Public Notice of Negative Declaration prior to release of the Draft Design Guidelines***

The Planning Department received many comments asking for additional time to review the Negative Declaration after the release of the first draft of the Citywide Design Guidelines. The required comment period for a Negative Declaration is 30 days according to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The draft documents were made available online and accessible to the general public and interested stakeholders since the Public Information Meeting dates were announced on August 25, 2010. Additionally, staff was available to discuss

the draft Design Guidelines with anyone who was interested in person, via email, or over the phone. To address the comments received regarding lack of review time, after publishing the Negative Declaration in the Los Angeles Times on August 25, 2010, the comment period was extended to September 7, 2010 and then to October 6, 2010 to allow interested parties more opportunities to comment on the Negative Declaration prepared for the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines

The purpose of the Initial Study and subsequent Negative Declaration was to review the project in its entirety for any potential negative environmental impacts resulting from the implementation of the Citywide Design Guidelines. Issues with the process have been noted and have since been addressed by providing adequate time for stakeholder feedback. There were no comments filed after the comment period closed on the Negative Declaration.

### ***Recognizing the Diversity of Urban and Suburban Forms in Los Angeles***

Some neighborhoods that embrace their suburban character felt the guidelines were more appropriate for “urbanized areas” and requested distinct guidelines for suburban and rural neighborhoods. For example, the Studio City Neighborhood Council indicated that parking lots fronting on major streets were a desirable feature and that street walls characteristic of older, urban neighborhoods were considered less desirable. The intent of the Design Guidelines is to encourage better design and improve walkability in all areas, in a manner that is compatible with both urban and suburban settings. For example, the guidelines in the “Off-Street Parking” section show a variety of options along the street edge with the objective of minimizing the appearance of driveways and parking areas. The Design Guidelines draw upon best Planning practices locally and from around the country. Special care was taken to ensure that the Design Guidelines address a variety of architectural scales and forms, and example photographs were taken from diverse neighborhoods around Los Angeles. Nevertheless, there may be individual communities with more specific guidelines or development regulations in a Community Plan, Specific Plan, or zone. Whenever adopted, community-specific requirements conflict with the Citywide Design Guidelines, the community-specific guidelines will prevail. The Guidelines are meant to be used as a tool that can be used to help achieve better design. As there are many different neighborhoods within the City of Los Angeles, every possible development scenario cannot be anticipated. However, the need for basic design guidance with some design flexibility and an emphasis on neighborhood context is paramount – the Citywide Design Guidelines achieve both of these objectives.

### ***Why Guidelines Instead of Standards?***

Many thoughtful public comments received pointed to the desire for more enforceable Citywide development standards. Planning Staff acknowledges the need for specific development standards. However, due to the anticipated diversity of neighborhood characteristics and forms throughout Los Angeles, prescriptive standards are better left to individual Community Plans to implement. The adoption of Citywide Design Guidelines would not preclude the future development of design standards and would not preclude the use of other zoning tools such as Specific Plans, Historic Preservation Overlay Zones, Community Design Overlays and Pedestrian Oriented Districts. These types of zoning ordinances are an effective means of establishing fixed standards (with “shall” directives) rather than the more flexible guideline approach (recommendations with “should” directives). The Citywide Design Guidelines will help inform the future development of design tools.

Although the Design Guidelines are written in a manner that provides some design flexibility in unique circumstances, the intention of the guidelines is very clearly stated in each objective statement and discretionary projects will be required to demonstrate that they meet the overall intent and purpose of each of the objectives. Applications that do not meet specific guidelines applicable to that project should provide rationale for the design and explain how the project will meet the intent of the General Plan, the Municipal Code, and these Guideline objectives. Whether the design is justified will be determined through required “Findings” in the appropriate section of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

### ***Implementation Program***

Some comments expressed concern that the Citywide Design Guidelines would justify zone changes, promote higher density projects, or trump existing zoning. The Design Guidelines do not promote or alter existing zone density, intensity, use, parking or other regulations in any way. Currently, without formally adopted Citywide Design Guidelines, most projects are subject to basic zoning requirements that address only the building envelope and parking requirements. The Citywide Design Guidelines help shape development within these existing parameters and discuss in great detail design considerations for projects. They are an effective tool that can be used by Planning staff and decision-makers to guide decisions and frame the public discussion in addition to all existing required findings and procedures mandated by the Los Angeles Municipal Code. The Design Guidelines will not override any zoning regulations. They are a metric by which to evaluate discretionary projects for their design elements and functional benefits in the context of their surrounding communities.

The Design Guidelines are written and intended for all projects seeking a discretionary approval that results in new buildings or significant building remodels. The Guidelines may also be used to assist others in the review of projects not under the discretion of the Planning Department. Compliance with the Citywide Design Guidelines will be required of projects requiring discretionary approvals by the Department of City Planning, as the Planning Department has the authority to interpret the Design Guidelines, discuss the application of the guidelines on individual projects with project applicants, and determine whether a discretionary project meets the overall purpose and intent of the guidelines and objectives. To encourage the use of the Design Guidelines, they will be made widely available online for use by all Neighborhood Councils, developers and designers and will be prominently displayed at Department of Building and Safety and City Planning public counters.

### ***A Living Document***

If adopted by the City Planning Commission as an Appendix to the Framework Element, the Citywide Design Guidelines are intended to be a 'living document' with periodic updates and modifications in consultation with the Area and City Planning Commissions and interested stakeholders. Planners envision continued efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of the Design Guidelines.

### **CONCLUSION**

Building upon existing adopted Design Guidelines found in the Walkability Checklist (adopted by the City Planning Commission on August 23, 2007), guidelines in the Framework Element, and adopted Community Plans, the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines will establish for the first time a consolidated set of guidelines organized by overarching objectives for Multifamily Residential, Commercial, and Industrial development to promote design excellence. The proposed Citywide Design Guidelines were developed to guide city staff, architects, community members and developers step-by-step in an easy to follow document to ensure design integrity and neighborhood compatibility from the earliest stages of conceptual project design. At the same time, the Citywide Design Guidelines can be an educational tool for community stakeholders to use in evaluating projects. The Design Guidelines will greatly benefit the majority of areas in the City, particularly those with no design guidelines currently. To that end, Planning Staff recommends that the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines for Residential, Commercial, and Industrial projects be adopted as an Appendix to the Framework Element by the City Planning Commission.

## FINDINGS

- 1. GENERAL PLAN FINDINGS.** In accordance with **Charter Section 556**, the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines, as an Appendix to the City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework Element, is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent, and provisions of the General Plan and its various Elements in that the Design Guidelines promote the implementation of the City's General Plan and Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC), and that they serve to implement existing urban design goals, objective and policies found in Community Plans and the Framework Element, and promote good zoning practice. The proposed Citywide Design Guidelines further the objectives of the Framework Element and Community Plans by establishing standard Design Guidelines for all Los Angeles communities, covering essential urban design considerations deemed to improve the overall quality of design in all neighborhoods in the City. Moreover, where any of the provisions of the Citywide Design Guidelines conflict with adopted Community Plans or Specific Plans, the neighborhood district plan shall always prevail.
- 2. FINDINGS OF CONSISTENCY WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK ELEMENT.** While the Framework Element does not directly address the design of individual communities, Chapter 10 - Implementation Programs of the Framework Element calls for the "formulat[ion] [of] citywide development standards". Consistent with the intent of the General Plan Framework Element, the Citywide Design Guidelines will become a requirement for all discretionary projects under review by the Department of City Planning and pave the way for the adoption of more fine-tuned development standards and guidelines in individual communities, dependent upon community needs and input. The proposed Design Guidelines go a long way in implementing the vision of the Framework Element of having one consolidated resource for Citywide Design Guidelines rather than redundant and often vague guidelines dispersed about various policy documents.

Furthermore, the Citywide Design Guidelines implement the goals, objectives, and policies in Chapter 5 - Urban Form and Neighborhood Design of the General Plan Framework Element in that the guidelines promote compatible development within existing activity centers. Within these centers of various sizes and functions and their surrounding residential communities, the Design Guidelines encourage pedestrian-oriented design elements, context-sensitive building heights and massing, and subtle transitions between different zones and land uses to create better connected, functional, and more livable communities.

- 3. FINDINGS OF CONSISTENCY WITH THE DRAFT TEN PRINCIPLES OF URBAN DESIGN IN THE FRAMEWORK ELEMENT:**

As previously stated, each section of the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines builds upon the themes and values expressed in the Ten Principles of Urban Design, adopted by the City Planning Commission on June 25, 2009.

### **A. TEN PRINCIPLES OF URBAN DESIGN – MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL/MIXED-USE GUIDELINES**

#### **1. DEVELOP INVITING AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT AREAS**

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines support the development of inviting and accessible transit areas by encouraging direct access to transit nodes and providing attractive open spaces to make transit areas a more desirable place to be through providing direct paths of travel for pedestrian destination within large development and the creation of primary entrances which are safe, accessible and close to transit stops.

2. REINFORCE WALKABILITY, BIKEABILITY AND WELL-BEING

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines support the reinforcement of walkability, bikeability and well-being by encouraging pedestrian-oriented amenities that improve the pedestrian and bicyclist experience. For instance, the guidelines recommend installing bicycle racks and lockers near building entrances in a safe, well-lit location, convenient for residents and visitors.

3. NURTURE NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines nurture neighborhood character by recommending that new developments reinforce existing neighborhood patterns, taking cues from existing façade rhythm along the street and using architectural treatment such as trim, material changes, paved walkways, and other design treatments consistent with surrounding buildings.

4. BRIDGE THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines bridge the past and the future by helping to protect the historic nature of significant structures, while still encouraging new development that does not detract from the preservation of its character. Special Guidelines for Historic Properties are provided to ensure that any additions, alterations or improvements take into consideration the preservation of original building materials and architectural features. Furthermore, the Design Guidelines refer to the Secretary of Interior Standards which provide further guidance on how to appropriately treat historic resources.

5. PRODUCE GREAT GREEN STREETS

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines support producing green streets because the guidelines put an emphasis on landscaping open areas and providing a pleasant experience for the users of the street through planting broad leaf evergreen and deciduous trees along the street frontage to provide a continuous canopy; and limiting paved areas to a balanced ratio with landscaping to ensure that the streetscape is not dominated by pavement.

6. GENERATE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines support generating open space by encouraging outdoor areas where people can congregate and connect, such as a community garden or tot lot.

7. STIMULATE SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION IN OUR CITY

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines stimulate sustainability and innovation in our City by encouraging green practices such as incorporating the principles of conservation and promoting reducing site grading through the use of natural topography and landform grading.

8. IMPROVE EQUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines support improving equality and opportunity by ensuring that everyone has equal access to building facilities and amenities. Examples include the placement of building entrances to ensure equal access for people of all mobility levels and providing accessible common amenities, such as open space, throughout residential buildings.

9. EMPHASIZE EARLY INTEGRATION, SIMPLE PROCESSES AND MAINTAINABLE SOLUTIONS.

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines emphasize the early integration, simple processes and maintainable solutions by serving as a preliminary tool in the project design process.

10. ENSURE CONNECTIONS

The Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines ensure connections by encouraging properties to remain sensitive to transitions between different land uses and physical differences in building design, such as maintaining a height compatible with adjacent building for multi-family projects adjacent to single-family zones, and stepping back upper floors to address transitions in scale.

**B. TEN PRINCIPLES OF URBAN DESIGN – COMMERCIAL GUIDELINES**

1. DEVELOP INVITING AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT AREAS

The Commercial Design Guidelines support the development of inviting and accessible transit areas by encouraging direct access to transit nodes and providing attractive open spaces to make transit areas a more desirable place to be.

2. REINFORCE WALKABILITY, BIKEABILITY AND WELL-BEING

The Commercial Design Guidelines support the reinforcement of walkability, bikeability and well-being by encouraging non auto-centric amenities that improve the pedestrian and bicyclist experience, such as the reconstruction of unused driveways into new, continuous sidewalks; pedestrian amenities such as benches or seating areas; and path lighting to extend safety of activities into the evening.

3. NURTURE NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The Commercial Design Guidelines nurture neighborhood character by recommending that new developments remain sensitive to height, scale, massing, style, and architectural materials of adjacent structures and transition between a variety of scales, architectural styles, and uses wherever necessary.

4. BRIDGE THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

The Commercial Design Guidelines bridge the past and the future by helping to protect the historic nature of significant structures, while still encouraging new development that does not detract from the preservation of its character. Special Guidelines for Historic Properties are provided to ensure that any additions, alterations or improvements take into consideration the preservation of original building materials and architectural features. Furthermore, the Design Guidelines refer to the Secretary of Interior Standards which provides further guidance on how to appropriately treat historic resources.

5. PRODUCE GREAT GREEN STREETS

The Commercial Design Guidelines support producing green streets because the guidelines put an emphasis on landscaping open areas and providing a pleasant experience for the users of the streets through planting broad leaf evergreen and deciduous trees along the street frontage to provide a continuous canopy; and limiting paved areas to a balanced ratio with landscaping to ensure that the streetscape is not dominated by pavement.

6. GENERATE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The Commercial Design Guidelines support generating open space by encouraging outdoor areas where people can congregate and connect. Shaded open areas that are easily accessible and comfortable, oriented towards sun and views while maintaining a sense of safety are examples of how a successful public open space can be generated.

7. STIMULATE SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION IN OUR CITY

The Commercial Design Guidelines stimulate sustainability and innovation in our City by encouraging green practices, such as planting native, drought tolerant plants to conserve

water, and using white or reflective paint on rooftops and light paving materials to reflect heat away from building and reduce the need for mechanical cooling.

**8. IMPROVE EQUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY**

The Commercial Design Guidelines support improving equality and opportunity by ensuring broad access to facilities and amenities in commercial buildings. Examples include equal access for people of all mobility levels into buildings and having equal access to public amenities throughout commercial buildings.

**9. EMPHASIZE EARLY INTEGRATION, SIMPLE PROCESSES AND MAINTAINABLE SOLUTIONS.**

The Commercial Design Guidelines emphasize the early integration, simple processes and maintainable solutions by serving as a preliminary tool in the project design process.

**10. ENSURE CONNECTIONS**

The Commercial Design Guidelines ensure connections by ensuring that properties remain sensitive to transitions between different properties and land uses.

**C. TEN PRINCIPLES OF URBAN DESIGN – INDUSTRIAL GUIDELINES**

**1. DEVELOP INVITING AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT AREAS**

The Industrial Design Guidelines support the development of inviting and accessible transit areas by encouraging direct access to transit nodes and providing attractive open spaces to make transit areas a more desirable place to be. Providing direct paths of travel for pedestrian destinations within large industrial developments that create primary entrances for pedestrians that are safe, easily accessible and a short distance from transit stops is an example of how the guidelines emphasize the importance of accessibility to public transit.

**2. REINFORCE WALKABILITY, BIKEABILITY AND WELL-BEING**

The Industrial Design Guidelines support the reinforcement of walkability, bikeability and well-being by encouraging pedestrian-oriented amenities that improve the pedestrian and bicyclist experience, such as providing bicycle lockers and/or racks near buildings entrances for employees and visitors and dispersing bicycle parking facilities throughout larger sites and locating them in convenient and visible areas in close proximity to primary building entrances.

**3. NURTURE NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER**

The Industrial Design Guidelines nurture neighborhood character by recommending that new developments transition between industrial and non-industrial uses and reinforce the existing façade rhythm along the street, where it exists, by using architectural elements such as trim, material changes, bays, clerestory windows, and other design treatments consistent with surrounding buildings.

**4. BRIDGE THE PAST AND THE FUTURE**

The Industrial Design Guidelines bridge the past and the future by helping to protect the historic nature of significant structures, while still encouraging new development that does not detract from the preservation of its character. Guidelines are provided to ensure that any additions, alterations, or improvements take into consideration the preservation of original building materials and architectural features and refers to the Secretary of Interior Standards which further provides criteria for a harmonious relationship between the old and the new.

5. PRODUCE GREAT GREEN STREETS

The Industrial Design Guidelines support producing green streets because the guidelines put a great emphasis on landscaping open areas and providing a pleasant experience for the users of the streets through planting broad leaf evergreen and deciduous trees along the street frontage to provide a continuous canopy; and limiting paved areas to a balanced ratio with landscaping to ensure that the streetscape is not dominated by pavement.

6. GENERATE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The Industrial Design Guidelines support generating open space by encouraging outdoor areas where people can congregate to sit, eat or watch other people; for instance, placing buildings around a central open space to promote safety and the use of shared outdoor areas for large industrial complexes is a common way to connect open spaces to other activity areas which are easily accessible to employees and comfortable for a substantial part of the year.

7. STIMULATE SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION IN OUR CITY

The Industrial Design Guidelines stimulate sustainability and innovation in our City by encouraging green practices such as integrating solar powered lighting to increase energy efficiency and orienting buildings on a site so that daylighting opportunities are maximized to harvest natural light within work spaces; and recommending the use of predominately deciduous trees adjacent to west, south, and southwest facing exposures to cool those elevations of the subject structure.

8. IMPROVE EQUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY

The Industrial Design Guidelines support improving equality and opportunity by ensuring access to visitors of all mobility levels within industrial facilities and ancillary amenities. Examples include identifiable building entrances, legible signage at multi-tenant industrial facilities, adequate lighting for public safety, and easily accessible open space areas.

9. EMPHASIZE EARLY INTEGRATION, SIMPLE PROCESSES AND MAINTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

The Industrial Design Guidelines emphasize the early integration, simple processes and maintainable solutions by serving as a preliminary tool in the project design process.

10. ENSURE CONNECTIONS

The Industrial Design Guidelines ensure connections by encouraging properties to remain sensitive to transitions between different land uses and physical differences in building design. For instance, the Guidelines urge the creation of height and visual transitions between industrial districts and adjacent commercial and residential neighborhoods by screening industrial uses or any associated outdoor storage from commercial or residential land uses by planting trees, shrubs, and vines. Providing landscaping is a successful way to transition without creating a disconnection between two properties with different land uses.

**4. CEQA FINDINGS**

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines further clarify the existing urban form policies within the General Plan Framework. The Department has prepared Negative Declaration ENV-2010-715-ND. An initial study was prepared and found that due to the fact that the proposed guidelines will not involve any changes to existing zoning or planned land uses, the proposed Design Guidelines will have no negative impact on the environment. The Citywide Design Guidelines (Appendix C) are a policy document and would not induce growth or new development.

The proposed Citywide Design Guidelines is a policy document supporting the implementation of the General Plan Framework. The proposed guidelines result in no changes to existing zoning, Specific Plans or any other land use regulations that affect the physical environment or any specific parcel. The Design Guidelines convey a policy direction for the City of Los Angeles. The Citywide Design Guidelines would implement adopted policies in the General Plan Framework Element which promote pedestrian-oriented development, precise considerations for site design and neighborhood compatibility, and are expected to raise the quality of new development in Los Angeles.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The Department of City Planning conducted extensive outreach to the community. Below is a summary of the Department's communication and efforts:

### **Public Information Meetings**

Three Public Information Meetings were held in three different regions of the City of Los Angeles. The intent of these meetings was to introduce and explain the proposed Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Design Guidelines under consideration and provide an opportunity for questions, answers, and feedback. Invitations were emailed to the entire Department of Neighborhood Empowerment contact list, City Council Offices and other interested parties.

August 30, 2010 Valley Region: Marvin Braude Building

August 31, 2010 Central/South/East Region: Los Angeles City Hall

August 31, 2010 West Region: Henry Medina Facility

Approximately 65 participants attended the three public meetings. A Feedback Survey was distributed at all three meetings; however, no completed surveys were returned. The following general comments were received at the public information meetings:

- The Environmental Clearance for the Design Guidelines had been published before the Draft Guidelines were publicly available for review.
- The Design Guidelines should be adopted as regulations rather than guidelines to make them more enforceable.
- A minimum 90-day review period should be planned for Neighborhood Councils to review the Design Guidelines. Many participants stated they had not received notification for the initial public meetings.
- Greater vetting of the Design Guidelines was encouraged.
- Participants recommended staff research the design guidelines in place for other cities, include Seattle, Washington.

### **City Planning Commission Director's Report**

On September 16, 2010, Planning staff delivered a status report to the City Planning Commission outlining the need for Citywide Design Guidelines, public comments received to date, and future public outreach planned. The Commission was generally supportive of the Design Guidelines and requested clarification on how the Design Guidelines would be implemented.

### **Focus Group Meeting**

One Focus Group was held with Plan Check NC, comprised of Neighborhood Council land use committee members from across the City. The meeting was held on Saturday, October 9, 2010 and 14 people were in attendance. An invitation to attend this meeting was sent to the Plan Check NC mailing list and those who had signed in at the Public Information Meetings.

**Area Planning Commission Meetings**

Planning staff presented the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines to each of the seven Area Planning Commissions for review and comment. Neighborhood Councils were notified of the meetings and agendas were posted on the Planning Department website for the following dates:

Tuesday, October 19	Harbor Area Planning Commission
Wednesday, October 20	West LA Area Planning Commission
Thursday, October 21	North Valley Area Planning Commission
Wednesday, October 27	East LA Area Planning Commission
Thursday, October 28	South Valley Area Planning Commission
Tuesday, November 2	South LA Area Planning Commission

Each of the Planning Commissions was in support of the Citywide Design Guidelines. Some suggestions were made relative to specific guidelines and the images selected. Those suggestions have since been incorporated into the final draft.

**Public Communication Received**

A total of 21 letters and emails were received from the general public regarding the proposed Citywide Design Guidelines. Many of the letters were from people who attended the public meetings and echo the comments that were given at the meetings.

Of these letters, the majority commented on the process rather than the content of the Design Guidelines. About a quarter of these letters were from those in support of the proposal with recommended modifications while an equal amount remained neutral about the proposal with comments and questions. The remainder of the letters contained inquiries only and expressed neither support nor lack thereof. There were no letters which opposed the proposed Design Guidelines.