

11.0 Commercial Infill

11.1 INTRODUCTION

“Infill” is the process of building a new structure on a vacant site within an existing neighborhood. These Infill guidelines are also applicable to the review of alterations to buildings, structures or sites within the HPOZ that are “Non-Contributing” as identified in the Historic Resource Survey.

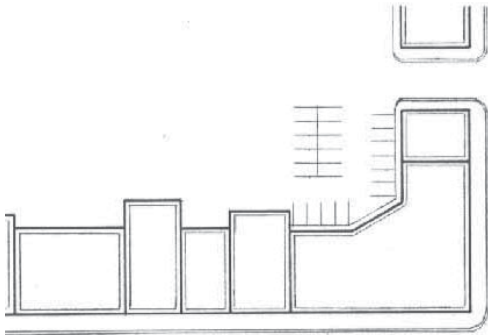
These Commercial Infill Guidelines are intended for the use of commercial property owners planning new buildings or structures on vacant sites or alterations to Non-Contributing buildings, structures or sites within the Lincoln Heights HPOZ. These guidelines help ensure that such new construction and alterations recognize and are sensitive to their historic context.

Non-Contributing resources are those buildings, structures, landscapes, natural features, or sites identified as Non-Contributing in the Historic Resources Survey for this HPOZ. Generally, Non-Contributing buildings or structures are those that have been built outside of the historic period of significance of the Lincoln Heights HPOZ, or are those that were built within that period but no longer retain the features (due to subsequent alterations) that identify them as belonging to that period. The historic period of significance of the area is usually the time period in which the majority of construction in the area occurred.

11.2 FORMAT

The Commercial Infill Guidelines are divided into sections, each covering a building design element. Elements from all sections will be important when planning or evaluating proposed new construction or alterations to existing non-contributing structures or sites.

The Commercial Infill section of the guidelines should be used in planning and reviewing projects involving most new buildings and structures in commercial areas. They are also intended for use in the planning and review of projects for structures in areas that were originally built as commercial areas which have since been converted to residential use.



New construction should maintain and define corners by continuing the streetwall. Architectural emphasis of corner lots is encouraged.



Standard mini-mall type design surrounded by parking destroys the historic character of surrounding streets and storefronts.

11.3 LOCATION AND SITE DESIGN

PURPOSE AND INTENT

Historically, buildings and structures in commercial areas were characterized by a consistent setback usually aligned against the sidewalk. This street wall should be preserved in the design of new infill construction. Commercial buildings were typically constructed with their sidewalls abutting one another, establishing a common, consistent street facade. In most cases, a rhythm of building widths was established along a street front that still exists, and this rhythm should be reflected in new construction.

GUIDELINES

1. The facades of new structures in commercial areas should maintain the setback of existing historic structures along the street front.
2. New structures should reflect the traditional widths of historic structures in the area.
3. New structures should be built to maintain the street wall, without side setbacks.
4. Parking areas should be located to the rear or side of new structures.
5. New parking areas should be screened from public view by means of fences or plantings along the street wall.



This building utilizes the same height and bulk of the adjacent building. The architecture also breaks up the building with awnings and storefront bays.



The building on the right does not relate to adjacent buildings because the height is different.

11.4 BUILDING MASS, SCALE, AND FORM

PURPOSE AND INTENT

Historic commercial areas in the Los Angeles were generally composed of two- to three-story flat roofed buildings composed as rectangular solids. The volume, height, and mass of the proposed project should preserve the relationship between buildings and streets. Planning should be done to respect the historic character of the neighboring buildings and care should be exercised to not overpower the neighbors through height size or bulk. The design of the project should create a new contribution to the district.

GUIDELINES

1. New structures should maintain the average scale of historic structures within the Lincoln Heights HPOZ area.
2. New structures that are taller than existing historic commercial structures in the area should be designed to emphasize the existing cornice heights on Contributing structures in the HPOZ area. All portions of buildings above the prevailing height for contributing buildings with frontage on both sides of the block of the same street as the frontage of the subject lot should be set back from the façade to be more compatible.
3. The basic building form for new commercial structures should be a simple rectangular solid.
4. New commercial structures should attempt to reflect the traditional commercial storefront widths in a historic commercial area.
5. A flat roof is the preferred roof form.



These guidelines encourage externally illuminated signs and buildings, utilizing lights such as goose neck lights.

11.5 MATERIALS AND DETAILS

PURPOSE AND INTENT

Materials commonly used on facades of historic commercial buildings included brick, stucco, and masonry. Architectural details were usually embellishments added to the solid plane of the facade or parapet details rising from it. Echoing these traditions in the design of new construction will help to preserve the distinctive character of our historic commercial areas.

GUIDELINES

1. Building materials should be similar, or at least appear similar, to those used historically such as brick, stone, metal, stucco, and wood. Concrete block is inappropriate.
2. Generally, architectural details should be arranged to emphasize the horizontal features of facades.
3. New construction should incorporate and articulate horizontal and vertical subdivisions with plane changes, material changes, window groupings, floor-to-floor divisions and cornice treatments to establish scale and interest.
4. The colors of permanent finish materials, such as brick, tile, and stucco, should be similar to those used historically.



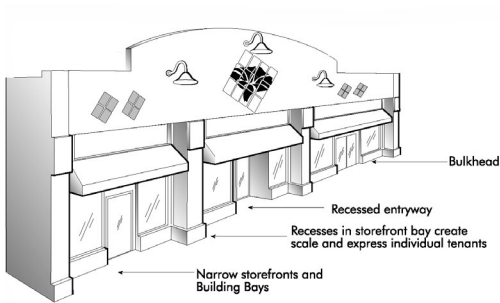
The parapet and other architectural details on this building help break up its physical bulk.



Though these buildings are all slightly different, they share architectural elements that tie them together.



This new commercial building maintains the tradition of the commercial storefront with windows and recessed doors.



11.6 OPENINGS, STOREFRONTS, AND ENTRIES

PURPOSE AND INTENT

Windows and doors strongly define the character of a building's design. Windows and doors define character through their shape, size, construction, materials, profile, and arrangement on the façade. Important defining features of a window include the sill profile, the height of the rails, the pattern of the panes and muntins, the arrangement of the sashes, the depth of the jamb, and the width and design of the casing and the head.

In addition to the door itself, historic commercial/industrial entryways were often framed by a surround that might have included a portico, sidelights, transoms, recessed entryway details, and other features whose preservation is important to its character.

The character of historic commercial block fronts is largely defined by the storefronts, entryways, windows and doors that were designed to create street level interest for pedestrians and passersby. While a historic commercial block front might be composed of a Mission Revival structure, a Moderne structure, and several Italianate structures, all of these structures would have presented a similar face to the sidewalk, with large expanses of glass storefront windows, welcoming well-marked entryways, and largely regular, horizontally massed windows. Maintaining this common vocabulary is an important part of maintaining the character of historic commercial districts.

GUIDELINES

1. On the ground floor of new commercial structures, a majority of the primary architectural façade should echo traditional retail storefronts.
2. The ground floor of the primary architectural façade should be composed primarily of transparent elements.
3. Recessed entryways are strongly encouraged for primary entrances on the ground floor level.

4. Primary entryways should be clearly marked through the use of important defining architectural elements, such as transoms, awnings, lintels, or surrounds.
5. Upper story windows should be regularly spaced and horizontally massed on the primary architectural façade.
6. On structures occupying corner lots, corner entryways with strong design elements should be encouraged. Entrances for main and secondary (upper) uses should face onto street fronts. Common lobbies opening to parking areas are preferred.
7. Roll down shutters should be concealed behind the façade. Open grille-type shutters are recommended.
8. Awnings and marquees at entries were incorporated to protect pedestrians and define the entrance on the façade.
9. New skylights should be low profile metal and glass.
10. Signage on commercial infill structures should follow the signage guidelines laid out in the commercial rehabilitation section.