

**DOWNTOWN CANOGA PARK  
COMMUNITY DESIGN OVERLAY DISTRICT (CDO)**

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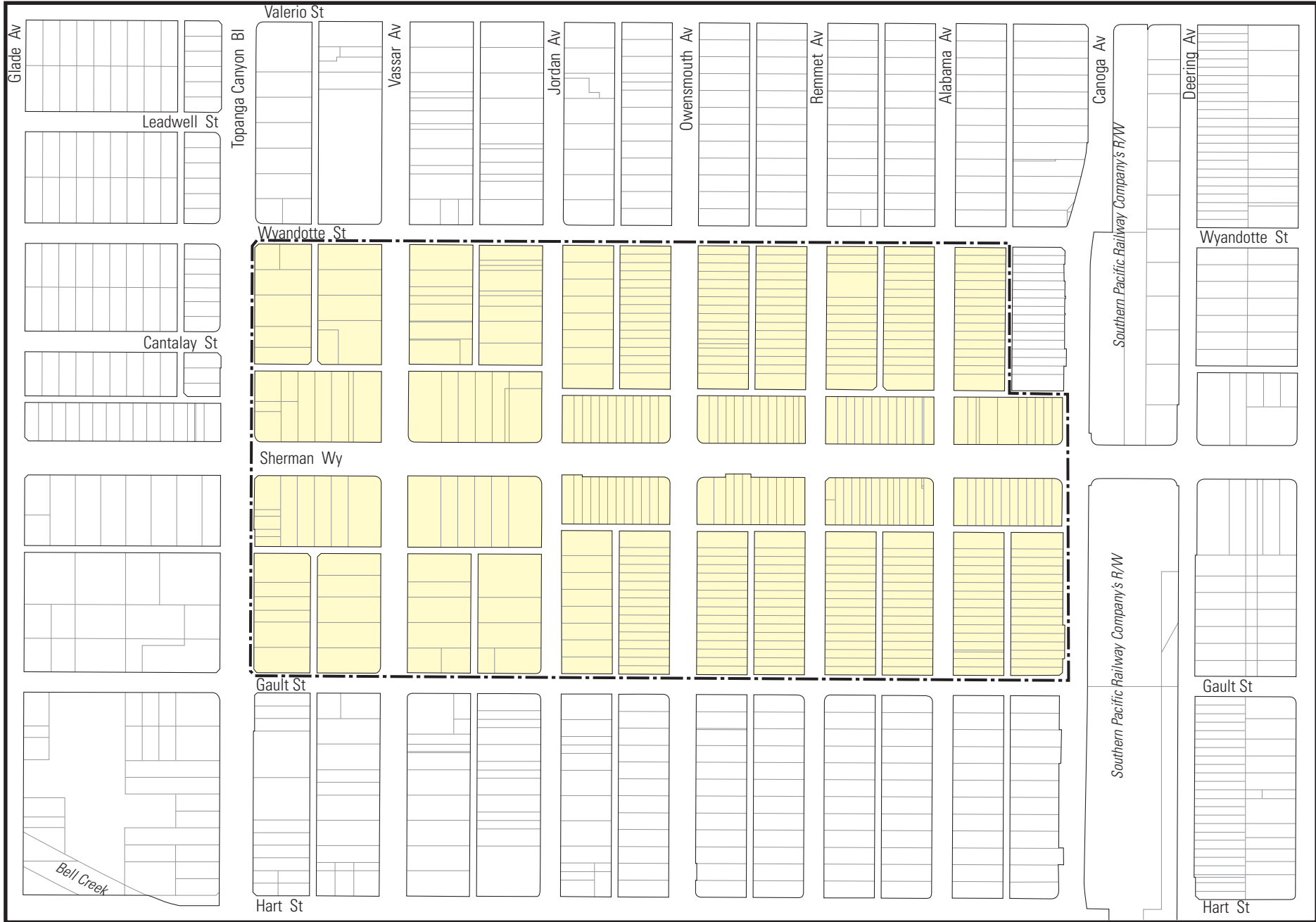
# **Design Guidelines & Standards**

**Approved by the City Planning Commission on May 25, 2000.  
Boundary Ordinance No. 173,508 effective November 4, 2000.**

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# Downtown Canoga Park Community Design Overlay District



Ord. No. 173,508  
CPC No. 1999-3224 SUD

Effective Date: 11/04/2000  
Council File 00-1311



# DOWNTOWN CANOGA PARK COMMUNITY DESIGN OVERLAY DISTRICT (CDO)

## Section 1.

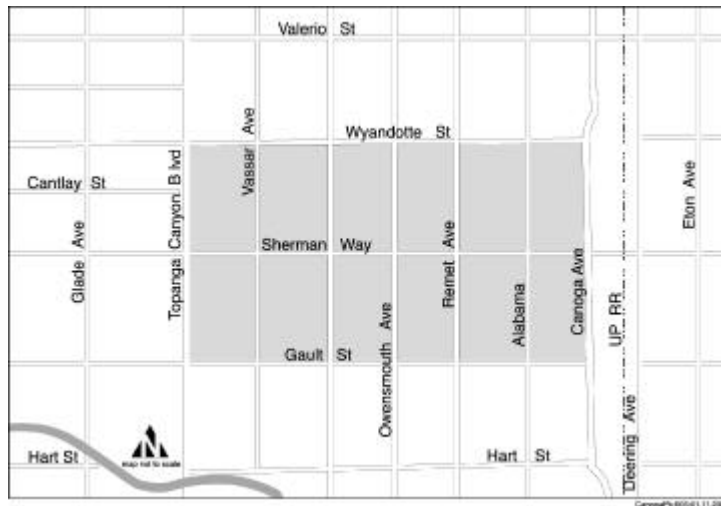
### INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Canoga Park Community Design Overlay District (CDO) provide guidelines and standards for private development projects in Downtown Canoga Park.

The Downtown Canoga Park CDO is complemented by the Downtown Canoga Park Streetscape Plan which incorporates streetscape design guidelines and standards that provide direction in the design of projects in the public right-of-way, such as street furniture, street lighting, and landscape. Together these two plans will encourage the integration of public and private space and direct development towards a more cohesive design concept by providing the community with tools for ongoing participation in the revitalization and development of the Downtown Canoga Park CDO.

All projects within Downtown Canoga Park must comply with the following Design Guidelines and Development Standards. These requirements fall within an overall design concept for Downtown Canoga Park based on pedestrian oriented design and is consistent with the “Main Street” character of traditional downtown’s. In addition to the mandatory Design Guidelines and Standards, advisory design recommendations have also been included. Advisory recommendations address issues difficult to regulate through mandatory standards. Nevertheless, consideration of these recommendations and their inclusion in project design supports the goals of the Downtown Canoga Park CDO.

#### A. Boundaries and Organization



Downtown Canoga Park is the area framed by Topanga Canyon Boulevard on the west, Canoga Boulevard on the east, Wyandotte Street on the north, and Gault Street on the south.

The design guidelines and standards adopted as part of the Community Design Overlay District apply to all commercially zoned property found within Downtown Canoga Park.

As discussed above, the Design Guidelines and Standards adopted as part of the Downtown Canoga Park CDO are mandatory requirements for projects in Downtown Canoga Park. The Design Guidelines are policy directives. Guidelines are implemented by subsequent Design Standards (often more than one standard exists for each Guideline). Below is an example of a Design Guideline and its implementing Standard.

**EXAMPLE**

**Building Setback**

**Guideline:** Provide for continuity in the existing streetwall by placing buildings on the front lot line.

**Standard:** The ground floor of any building fronting Sherman Way, Gault Street, Wyandotte Street, Vassar Avenue, Jordan Avenue, Owensmouth Avenue, Remmet Avenue, Alabama Avenue, or Canoga Avenue shall be built to the front lot line.

Advisory recommendations are easily differentiated from mandatory requirements by use of the word “should”. Mandatory design standards, by contrast, use the word “shall”.

**B. Downtown Canoga Park History**

Downtown Canoga Park is the historical Central Business District of the western San Fernando Valley. Its development dates to the 1890s when Canoga Park emerged as an agricultural community. With the arrival of the Pacific Electric Railway in 1912, further residential growth spurred new commercial activity throughout the 1930s and 1940s. In the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s the area became a rapidly growing community based on employment in the aerospace industry.

**Section 2.**

**GOALS AND PRINCIPLES**

**A. Goals**

The purpose of the Downtown Canoga Park Community Design Overlay District is to improve the physical appearance of Downtown Canoga Park and rekindle its vitality as a pedestrian oriented community center. Successful downtown’s possess several important attributes: a mix of goods and services, substantial pedestrian traffic, a central location, and a physical form and appearance that engages the public and supports community life. Downtown Canoga Park developed

as such a community center and despite years of modifications, its existing development pattern retains the underlying physical features necessary for a successful downtown.

These physical features include the construction of most buildings to the front lot line, storefronts originally built to a human scale, and few mid-block breaks for automobile ingress or egress. The design guidelines and standards herein build on Downtown Canoga Park's existing architectural assets and offer guidance and direction for storefront rehabilitation and infill development. The specific goals of the Downtown Canoga Park Community Design Overlay District are:

- To promote storefront design that invites pedestrian interest and activity.
- To provide direction for site planning standards that facilitate pedestrian movement.
- To reinforce the existing pedestrian scale of Downtown Canoga Park.
- To provide direction for storefront rehabilitation and infill development that is consistent with pedestrian oriented areas.

## **B. Design Principles**

The Design Guidelines and Standards for Downtown Canoga Park are based on a set of principles that support a pedestrian oriented downtown. Successful downtowns are centers of community life which offer a mix of retail, service, entertainment, street life, civic, and cultural activities. People enjoy being downtown because of the diversity and energy not found in ordinary commercial strips and automobile oriented shopping centers.

Essential to this community life is the physical environment created by the arrangement and design of buildings, storefronts, parking lots, pedestrian ways, and streets. Canoga Park possesses many necessary architectural assets to be a vital downtown. The Downtown Canoga Park CDO incorporates site planning, architectural, and storefront design standards based on the following six principles.

- 1. Activity.** Human activity pervades the pedestrian oriented commercial district, and development in Downtown Canoga Park should promote an active street life. The most important feature of downtown Canoga Park is the public open space created by buildings facades on the front lot line. Each block of storefronts frames the street and sidewalk, creating defined outdoor space. This public space promotes

community life by encouraging pedestrian activity that brings life and energy to Downtown Canoga Park. This space is defined by continuous building walls (i.e. streetwalls), which, together, achieve a whole greater than their parts. Guidelines and Standards based on this principle address building setbacks, street orientation, entrances, and windows.

2. **Pedestrian Scale.** Most storefronts in the Canoga Park CDO are built to a pedestrian scale. Pedestrian scale refers to the perceived size or bulk of a building compared to a human body. Pedestrian scale can be achieved through storefront ornamentation, reduction of blank surface through building articulation, color, texture, and decoration. Guidelines and standards based on this principle address wall surface, windows, awnings, signs, and architectural treatments, such as color or tiling.
3. **Transparency.** The dominant feature of the streetwall, at the first story level, should be clear glass or open elements. Transparent elements include storefront windows, doorways, transom windows, and openings that provide views into the storefront. These elements create visual interest and invite pedestrian window shopping. Design Guidelines and Development Standards based on this principle address doors, windows, and signage.
4. **Individuality.** Just as a sign might show the name of a business or the nature of goods sold, the physical appearance of a storefront provides important information about the quality of the store. Storefronts should express distinctiveness within the context of the overall design guidelines. This principle is reinforced by guidelines relating to color and materials, signage, awnings, and lighting.
5. **Compatibility.** Many buildings in downtown Canoga Park have similar materials and styles. Building and storefront design should be compatible with existing development. Storefront design can achieve compatibility through selection of colors, spacing and proportion of building openings, and in the choice of exterior surface materials.
6. **Simplicity.** Storefronts in Downtown Canoga Park should be clean and simple. Examples of this principle include signs limited to business identification, color schemes that are simple and limited to two or three colors, and windows kept clear and unobstructed. This principle is addressed through guidelines and standards for color, windows, signage, and building materials.

## Section 3.

### ADMINISTRATION

All commercial projects in the Downtown Canoga Park Community Design Overlay District will be reviewed for compliance with the Design Guidelines and Standards prior to being issued a building permit. Below is a definition of “Project”, an outline of procedures for submitting an application for review, required submittal materials, and procedures to appeal determinations.

#### A. Project Definition

The definition of a Project is provided in Chapter 1, Section 13.08 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC).

*“The CDO applies to the erection, construction, addition to, or exterior structural alteration of any building or structure, including, but not limited to, pole signs and/or monument signs located in a Community Design Overlay District. A project does not include construction that consists solely of (1) interior remodeling, interior rehabilitation or repair work; (2) alterations of, including structural repairs, or additions to, any existing building or structure in which the aggregate value of the work, in any one 24-month period, is less than 50 percent of the building or structure’s replacement value before the alterations or additions, as determined by the Department of Building and Safety, unless the alterations or additions are to any building facade facing a public street; or (3) a residential building on a parcel or lot which is developed entirely as a residential use and consists of four or fewer dwelling units, unless expressly provided for in a Community Design Overlay District established pursuant to this section.”*

#### B. Procedures for Private Projects

Upon application for a building permit, the Department of Building and Safety refers applicants to the City Planning Department to determine if the proposal is a project according to the above definition. For simple cases, such as signs, applicants may receive an immediate sign-off. For most cases, however, staff review is necessary. Below is a list of necessary application materials for review of a CDO project. A determination by the Planning Department is required 20 days from the date all required materials are submitted and the project is deemed complete.

#### C. CDO Project Submittal Materials

1. Master Land Use Application
2. Design Overlay Plan Application
  - Description of the project
  - Explanation of how the proposed project specifically complies with the relevant CDO Guidelines and Standards.

3. Architectural Plans
  - Vicinity Map with the location of applicants' property.
  - Site/Plot Plan at a minimum 1/8" scale.
  - Elevations (N, S, E, AND W) of existing and proposed structures, with all dimensions included.
  - For applicable projects, architectural detail sheet including, but not limited to Articulation of main facade elements, windows, doors, balconies, exterior building materials, exterior wall surface treatment, decorative elements, color, roof treatments, wall signs, and monument signs.
  - Landscape plan, if necessary.
  - Color renderings of the project if deemed necessary by planning staff.
  
4. Photographs (a minimum of 4"x 6")
  - Subject Site.
  - Subject Project
  - A panoramic view of all structures within a distance of 200 feet on either side of the subject site.
  - A panoramic view of existing structures on the opposite side of the street within 300 feet of the subject site.

**D. Appeals**

Once the determination approving or disapproving a CDO project application is final until the 15-day appeal period has expired. Appeals may be filed by applicants or interested parties. Appeals shall be in writing and shall set forth specifically where the petitioner believes the findings and decision to be in error. Appeals shall be filed on Form CP-7769.

**Section 4.**

**DEFINITIONS**

The following words and phrases, whenever used in this document, shall be construed as defined in this section. Words and phrases not defined herein shall be construed as defined in Sections 12.03 and 13.07 C of the LAMC.

**Awning:** A roof like cover extending in front of a door or window to provide protection from the sun or rain.

**Barrel Awnings:** Round awnings.

**Bulkhead:** Base of the storefront between the sidewalk and the window.



**Cannister Sign:** A wall sign whose letters and symbols are placed on the external plane of a box attached to a building or structure.

**Combed Finish Stucco:** A stucco finish produced by dragging a serrated tool across the stucco surface before it sets.

**Dash-Troweled Finish** - A stucco finish produced by troweling the high spots of a dashed stucco.

**Facade:** The front of a building or any of its sides facing a public way or space.

**Fenestration:** The design, proportioning, and disposition of windows and other exterior openings of a building.

**Human of Pedestrian Scale:** The apparent size of bulk of a building with respect to the size of the human body.

**HVAC:** Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Equipment.

**Illuminated Architectural Canopy Sign:** An enclosed illuminated structure that is attached to the wall of a building with the face of the sign approximately parallel to the wall and the message integrated into its surface (LAMC).

**Infill:** Development between existing structures.

**Rhythm Stipple Finished Stucco:** A stucco finish produced by troweling the high spots of a stippled stucco surface before it sets.

**Streetwall:** The wall of facades created in a pedestrian oriented district when stores are built to the front lot-line and built from side lot-line to side lot-line.

**Stipple-troweled finish** - A stucco finish produced by troweling the high spots of a stippled stucco surface before it sets.

**Structural Bay:** Any division of a wall marked off by vertical supports.

**Stucco:** A coarse plaster composed of Portland or masonry cement, sand and hydrated lime, mixed with water and applied in a plastic state to form a hard covering for exterior walls.

**Troweled Finish:** A dense, smooth finish obtained by working a fresh concrete or plaster surface with a steel trowel.

## Section 5.

### DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

#### A. Site Planning

Pedestrian oriented districts are a focus of community life. These places are known for activity, a physical development pattern that provides for pedestrian movement, and an inviting

environment for shoppers. Factors such as the size and massing of buildings, the orientation of storefronts, and the location of parking lots greatly influence the quality of pedestrian activity in such districts and distinguish them from traditional shopping centers of strip developments.

Downtown Canoga Park is developed as a pedestrian oriented downtown and retains many of the characteristics of such districts:

- Streetwalls consisting of buildings without side yards built to the front lot line.
- Parking lots placed at the rear of stores with ingress and egress from side streets.
- Building entrances oriented to the pedestrian public right-of-way.



The site planning guidelines and standards located below reinforce the existing development pattern and provide direction for infill construction, rehabilitation, or redevelopment of existing buildings.

***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following Design Guidelines and Standards regarding site planning.***

#### **Building Setback**

**Guideline 1:** Provide for continuity in the existing streetwall by siting new buildings on the front lot line.

**Standard 1a: Setback.** The ground floor of any building fronting Sherman Way, Gault Street, Wyandotte Street, Vassar Avenue, Jordan Avenue, Owensmouth Avenue, Remmet Avenue, or Canoga Avenue shall be built to the front lot line.

**Standard 1b: Setback-Corners.** The ground floor of any building fronting Sherman Way and a cross-street (Gault Street, Wyandotte Street, Vassar Avenue, Jordan Avenue, Owensmouth Avenue, Remmet Avenue, Alabama Avenue, or Canoga Avenue) shall be built to the front and side lot lines with allowance for visibility triangle as required by Chapter 1, Section 12.21 c. 7 of the LAMC.

**Storefront Orientation**

**Guideline 2:** Promote ease of pedestrian movement between stores and enhance the level of pedestrian activity in the downtown area by placing business entrances on the sidewalk between the storefront and the street.

**Standard 2: Entrances.** Primary ground floor building entrances shall front the public right-of-way.

**Parking**

**Guideline 3:** Provide for continuity of the Downtown Canoga Park streetwall by screening parking lots placed between buildings and adjacent to the public right-of-way through use of architectural elements and landscaping.

**Standard 3a: Buffer Landscape.** Parking lots adjacent to the public right-of-way shall be separated from the sidewalk by a minimum continuous, 5-foot wide landscape buffer. Breaks may be provided for pedestrian access only. In addition to landscaping standards included in the Streetscape Plan, trees of a minimum fifteen-gallon size shall be planted at a ratio of one tree for every 20 lineal feet of parking lot frontage. Landscape buffers shall be planted with drought resistant ground cover in addition to any street trees or placement of hardscape.

**Standard 3b: Landscape Wall.** Surface parking lots adjacent to Sherman Way shall be screened by a solid wall having a continuous height of three and one-half feet. Breaks may be provided for pedestrian access only.

### **Automobile Ingress/Egress**

**Guideline 4:** Minimize conflicts between pedestrians and automotive traffic by providing vehicular access to businesses or parking lots off site streets away from Sherman Way or Owensmouth Avenue.

**Standard 4: Ingress and Egress.** New points of Ingress or Egress off Sherman Way to public or private parking lots is prohibited.

## **ARCHITECTURAL - BUILDING COMPOSITION**

Building composition and storefront design in Downtown Canoga Park should promote a human scale, maintain existing rhythms established by neighboring buildings, and encourage individual expression within the context of pedestrian oriented architecture.

Building composition refers to the overall design of the building, its relationship to neighboring buildings and the district overall. Important design considerations include building opening proportions, height to width ratios, and roof lines. The design of new infill projects or the renovation of existing buildings should be based on the following considerations:

- Maintain characteristics proportion (relationship of height to width) of existing facades.
- Identifying the common horizontal elements (e.g., roofline, storefront height, bulkheads) and vertical elements (piers, doors, windows) found between neighboring structures and developing building designs using a similar pattern.
- Maintaining the proportion and spacing of openings established by adjacent buildings.
- Maintaining the predominant difference between upper story openings and ground level openings.

### **B. Window and Door Openings**

The pattern and proportion of window and door openings is important in establishing a pedestrian scale at the ground floor level, providing for articulation in the streetwall to create visual interest, and maintaining a unifying horizontal rhythm between the subject property and neighboring properties.

***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following Design Guidelines and Standards regarding Building Openings.***

## Wall Openings

**Guideline 5:** Encourage window shopping by providing maximum transparency in the ground floor building facade.

**Standard 5: Ground Floor Openings.** Wall openings (windows and doors) shall occupy at least seventy percent of the ground floor's street facade.

## Upper Floor Windows

**Guideline 6:** Maintain the pattern of upper floor wall openings established by neighboring structures. If no pattern exists (for example if no neighboring structures with more than one floor exist) upper story fenestration should establish a rhythm.

**Standard 6a: Upper Floor Windows.** Each floor above the ground floor shall provide for a minimum of two windows.

**Standard 6b: Window Proportion/Spacing.** Windows on floors above the ground floor shall be built to identical proportions of other windows on the same floor and shall be regularly spaced.

**Standard 6c: Window Height/Width Ratio.** Upper floor windows shall have a greater height to width ratio.



**In the example above, second story windows exhibit a greater height to width ratio, when they are spaced in a regular pattern.**

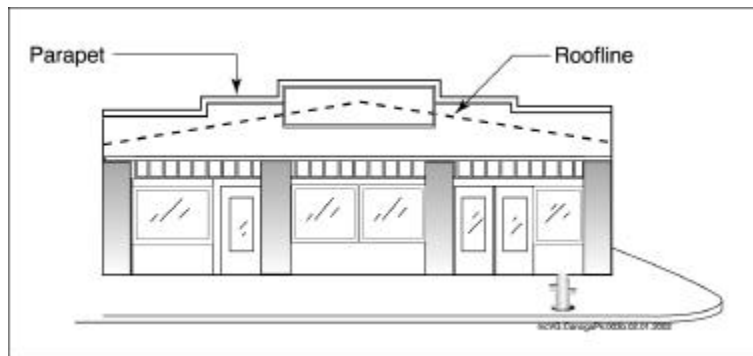
## C. Roof lines

Roof lines are an important design element in Downtown Canoga Park. Most roofs in downtown Canoga Park are flat with cornice elements and parapets extending above the roof line. The varied roof lines in Canoga Park provide visual interest and functionality. Below are recommendations to

consider when designing projects.

***The following recommendations regarding roof lines should be considered when designing buildings in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO:***

- Roofs should be flat. Decorative cornice elements and parapets may be sculpted or stepped and may extend above the roof line.
- Consider the roof lines of adjacent buildings to avoid clashes in scale, proportion, style, and materials.
- Severe roof pitches that create prominent or out-of-scale building elements, such as A-frame roofs, geodesic domes, or chalet styled buildings should be avoided.
- The roof should be designed to screen rooftop mechanical equipment. Mechanical equipment should be screened by architectural features such as facade parapets (see Guideline 10). Wood lattice and plywood screens added as “afterthoughts” should be avoided.



**D. Color**

The colors used on a facade can be provided by the natural colors of the materials, such as brick and stone, the color of architectural treatments (such as tile or brass fittings), or the use of paint. Paint offers an inexpensive way to improve the overall appearance of a storefront. When paint is used, colors should be chosen to complement the colors of adjacent structures. Major building elements on a single building, such as cornice window trim, or doorframes should have a similar color scheme. A principle of these Design Guidelines is to encourage individuality in architectural expression within the context of the overall appearance of the block face and the district. The use of colors that contrast sharply to draw attention to an individual storefront at the expense of adjacent storefronts contradicts the goal of the Downtown Canoga Park

Community Design Overlay District. Below are general guidelines regarding color:

***The following recommendations regarding color should be considered when developing building designs in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO:***

- Rely on the natural color of materials such as brick, terrazzo, marble, tile, and earthtone colors of stucco.
- Use a similar color scheme for major building elements on a single building, such as the cornice, window trim, and door frames.
- Use colors that blend into the background surface for utilitarian elements such as down spouts, gutters, vents, and other miscellaneous mechanical equipment.
- Match the color of building ornamentation that contributes to the overall design composition of the building to defining architectural elements such as window trim and door frames.

**Color**

**Guideline 7:** Use colors that complement neighboring storefronts and enhance appearance of the district.

**Standard 7a: Fluorescent Colors.** Use of fluorescent colors shall be prohibited.

**Standard 7b: Number of Colors.** Use of exterior paint shall be limited to four different colors.

**E. Lighting**

The use of lighting as an architectural element in storefront design offers Downtown Canoga Park several important benefits. First, storefronts that illuminate sidewalks create a greater sense of security and promote pedestrian activity. Second, lighting can be an attractive architectural element that animates storefronts by adding shadow and contrast to the storefront. Finally, storefront lighting can promote the store by highlighting display cases.

***The following recommendations regarding storefront lighting should be considered when developing building designs in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO:***

- Building facades should be highlighted through “up” lights or accent lights placed on the facade.

- Goosneck lights mounted on the building facade may be used to highlight facade features and signs.
- Display windows should be accented by using lights placed inside the buildings.

***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following Design Guidelines and Standards regarding storefront lighting:***

**Storefront Lighting**

**Guideline 8:** Direct storefront lighting onto the facade or the sidewalk immediately in front of the store.

**Standard 8: Glare.** Lighting shall be shielded to prevent glare on adjacent properties.

**F. Mechanical Equipment Screening**

All mechanical equipment, whether on the roof, sides of the building or mounted on the ground, should be screened from public view. Screening should be architecturally integrated with the building through materials, color, texture, shape, size, and with architectural features, such as facade parapets.

***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following Design Guidelines and Standards regarding Mechanical Equipment Screening:***

**Equipment Screening**

**Guideline 9:** All mechanical equipment should be screened from the public view. Equipment can be screened through use of building parapets, landscape walls, and other architectural treatments.

**Standard 9a: Mechanical Equipment.** All exterior mechanical equipment, including HVAC equipment, satellite dishes, and cellular antennas, shall be screened from the view provided on Sherman Way, Vassar Avenue, Gault Street, Jordan Avenue, Remmet Avenue, and Alabama Avenue.

**Standard 9b: Window and Door Openings.** No mechanical equipment (e.g., air conditioners) shall be permitted in window or door openings.

**G. Exterior Surface Materials**

Exterior surface materials add texture and color to storefront facades. Use of varied building materials increases articulation of the streetwall and enhances visual interest. Traditional



materials in Downtown Canoga Park include brick, stucco, and tile.

***The following recommendations regarding exterior building material choice should be considered in designing projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO:***

- Several complementary materials, particularly at the ground floor level, should be used to maintain visual interest.
- Higher quality materials communicate that the store is also of high quality.
- Avoid an overly themed choice of finish materials. For example, wood siding that conveys a western motif, metal siding to convey an industrial theme, or plaster and wood for an English Tudor theme are out of place in Downtown Canoga Park.
- Use materials similar to those of neighboring structures.

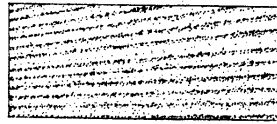
***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following Design Guidelines and Standards regarding exterior surface materials:***

**Exterior Surface Materials**

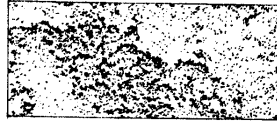
**Guideline 10:** New infill buildings should be constructed to integrate and harmonize with adjacent buildings. New infill construction should be sensitive to the adjacent building design and use exterior surface materials that complement existing buildings. Brick, smooth stucco (float or trowel finish), and stone are appropriate exterior surface materials for Downtown Canoga Park.

**Standard 10a: Exterior Surface Materials.** The use of wood, metal, and heavily textured stucco (combed finish, dash troweled finish, stipple-troweled finish) as primary exterior building Materials shall be prohibited.

**Standard 10b: Accent Materials.** Notwithstanding Standard 10a, above, wood and metal may be used for door frames, window frames, and other accent uses.



- Combed finish  
A stucco finish produced by dragging a serrated tool across the stucco surface before it sets.



- Dash-Troweled finish  
A stucco finish produced by troweling the high spots of a dashed stucco.



- Stipple-troweled finish  
A stucco finish produced by troweling the high spots of a stippled stucco surface before it sets.

## H. Signs

The placement, construction, color, font style, and content of signs is extremely important in the overall appearance of Downtown Canoga Park. The use of signs is an important design consideration for two reasons: 1) Signs are important because they identify the presence of a business on the street and 2) signs have a collective impact on the appearance of the entire district. Signs in the Downtown Canoga Park Community Design Overlay District are regulated by the LAMC Chapter 19.

***The following recommendations regarding signs should be considered when designing signage for the Downtown Canoga Park CDO:***

- A sign with a brief succinct message is simpler and faster to read, cleaner in appearance, and more attractive.
- Colors should be selected to contribute to legibility and design integrity. Use significant contrast between the background and letter or symbol colors. Reading signs with little contrast between sign letters and background colors is difficult.
- Signs should be placed at or near the entrance to a building to show the most direct access into the business. On older buildings a sign band may be featured as an architectural element. Signs should be placed within the sign band where they exist.
- The size and shape of a sign should be proportionate to the scale of the building.

***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following Design Guidelines and Standards regarding signs.***

**Signs**

**Guideline 11:** Illuminate signs through external light sources. Use internal illumination only for signs composed of individual channel cut letters.

**Standard 11a: Canister Signs.** Canister Signs shall be prohibited.

**Standard 11b: Sign Illumination.** Illuminated Architectural Canopy Signs shall be prohibited.

**ARCHITECTURE - STOREFRONT DESIGN**

The treatment of storefront design is particularly important in pedestrian oriented districts, such as Downtown Canoga Park. Good storefront design enhances the pedestrian experience by creating a visually interesting streetscape, showcasing merchandise, and identifying the mix of goods and services in the CDO area. Sensitive storefront design promotes individual businesses in ways that signs alone do not. Below are storefront Design Guidelines and Development Standards intended to enhance the appearance of individual businesses and all of Downtown Canoga Park.

**I. Storefront Bays**

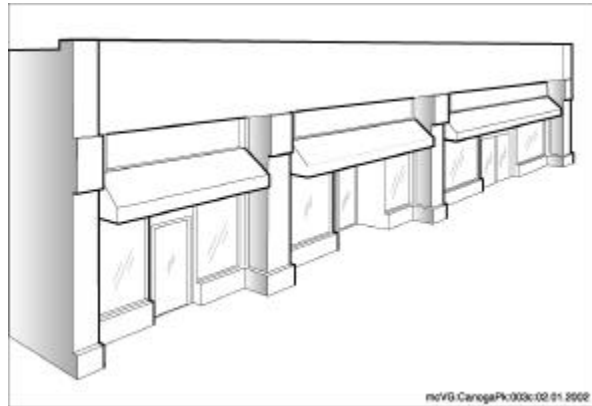
Storefront bays are the building blocks of the downtown streetwall. Storefront bays are the opening in the facade at the ground floor level within which storefronts are placed. The storefront bay is defined by the storefront cornice, piers on the sides, and the sidewalk at the bottom. Many storefronts within Downtown Canoga Park are placed entirely within one storefront bay. These stores are older structures with a narrow width to height relationship. More modern buildings have a greater width to height ratios but may include several storefront bays to maintain the existing rhythm of the streetwall, add visual interest, and frame display windows. Visual interest can be enhanced through architectural treatment such as tile or landscaping where depth permits.

***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following Design Guidelines and Standards regarding storefront bays.***

### **Recessed Storefront Bays**

**Guideline 12:** Recess storefront bays to add visual interest to the streetwall and create an inviting window shopping environment. This recess frames display windows and invites window shoppers.

**Standard 12: Storefront Recess.** Storefront bays shall be recessed at least three inches from the front plane of the building.



### **Storefront Articulation - Structural Bays**

**Guideline 13:** Provide visual interest by providing for breaks in the streetwall. Avoid large unbroken surfaces on the storefront by dividing wide storefronts into structural bays.

**Standard 13: Storefront Articulation.** All ground floor storefronts greater than 30 feet in length shall provide for structural bays at a minimum of 20 foot intervals.

## **J. Storefront Entrances**

***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following Design Guidelines and Standards regarding Storefront Entrances:***

### **Entry Orientation**

**Guideline 14:** Orient storefront entrances to the public right-of-way to facilitate pedestrian movement between stores and reinforce the existing pattern established by the streetwall.

**Standard 14: Entry Orientation.** The primary building entrance shall front the public right-of-way.



### **Entry Emphasis**

**Guideline 15:** Design storefront entryways to become prominent in the facade design and to create an inviting entrance to the store.

**Standard 15a: Entry Recesses.** Storefront entries shall be recessed a minimum of two feet from the front lot line.

**Standard 15b: Entry Illumination.** Storefront entries shall be illuminated.

**Standard 15c: Architectural Treatment.** Entryways shall be enhanced through architectural treatments, such as tiling on the floor or around the doorway, individual awnings, or placement of signs over the entryway.

### **Doors**

**Guideline 16:** Doors should contribute to the overall transparency of the storefront.

**Standard 16:** Doors for retail shops shall contain 70 percent clear glass (90 percent light transmission).

## **K. Storefront Windows**

Windows should be the dominant feature of the storefront in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO. This transparency showcases the nature and quality of the business by displaying merchandise, promoting window shopping by pedestrian traffic, and allowing light into the store.

***The following recommendations regarding storefront windows should be considered when developing storefront designs in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO***

- Security provisions often obscure storefront windows and communicate questions to pedestrians about safety in the district.
- Visible security precautions such as security bars and scissor or roll down grills negate the positive transparent impact provided by windows.
- Use alternatives such as interior electric security and fire alarm systems or vandal-proof glazing which is resistant to impact.

***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following design Guidelines and Standards regarding Storefront Design.***

**Security Grills**

**Guideline 17:** Security grills often portray a negative image about the safety and appeal of the area. Use alternatives to security grills or ensure that the grills are not visible during store hours of operation.

**Standard 17a: Exterior Security Grills.** Exterior security grills or permanently affixed security bars shall be prohibited.

**Standard 17b: Security Grill Encasement.** Interior security grills must recess completely into pockets completely conceal the grill when it is retracted.

**Standard 17c: Roll-Down Security Grills.** Roll-down security grills that conceal storefront windows shall be prohibited.

**Bulkheads**

**Guideline 18:** Provide storefront bulkheads to ease window maintenance and provide variation in the front plane of the facade.

**Standard 18a Bulkhead.** Storefront windows shall be a minimum of 18 inches and a maximum of 36 inches from the sidewalk grade to accommodate a traditional bulkhead.

**Standard 18b: Architectural Treatment.** Permitted exterior materials for storefront bulkheads are tile, brick, or stucco.

## **Window Transparency**

**Guideline 19:** Transparent windows allow light into storefronts, are attractive to window shoppers, and showcase merchandise and other goods. Storefront windows should maintain their transparency through choice of glass and careful placement of window signs.

**Standard 19a: Transparency.** Windows shall be clear, allowing a minimum 90 percent light transmission.

**Standard 19b: Window Sign Size.** Window signs shall be limited to permanent signs that occupy no more than 15 percent of the window surface.

**Standard 19c: Window Sign Content.** Content in window signs shall be limited to the name of the business, hours of operation, product sold or image.

## **L. Awnings and Canopies**

Awnings and canopies provide an aesthetic and functional role in storefront design. Their functional role is to provide shade over storefronts, regulate sunlight entering the store, and provide protection from the elements. As an aesthetic consideration, awnings can provide variation to simple storefront designs, establish a horizontal rhythm between structures where none exists, and add color to the storefront and the streetwall. Although they share similar roles, the difference between awnings and canopies is in materials and construction. Awnings are usually made of cloth and are framed by wood or metal. Canopies are permanently affixed to buildings, are flat, and constructed of solid materials.

***The following recommendations regarding awnings and canopies should be considered when developing storefront designs in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO:***

- **Awning Length:** Individual awnings for each structural bay of a storefront are preferable to one unified awning covering several bays.
- **Awning Shape:** Awning shape should relate to window and door openings. Design awnings to fit the architecture by determining the awning's form from the shape and dimensions of the building bay on which they will attach. The shape of the awning should be based on the architecture of the building. Specifically, round barrel awnings are more appropriate for windows framed by arches. Standard rectangular awnings are appropriate for square or rectangular

shaped window openings.

- Awning Signage: Signs on awnings should be minimal.

***All projects in the Downtown Canoga Park CDO must comply with the following design Guidelines and Standards regarding Storefront Awnings and Canopies.***

**Awnings**

**Guideline 20:** Add visual interest to storefronts through the use of high-quality awnings that provide articulation in the streetwall (the LAMC permits awnings and canopies to encroach four feet into the public way if they are at least eight feet above the sidewalk).

**Standard 20a: Awning Materials.** Awnings shall be constructed of canvas with metal or wood frames.

**Standard 20b: Awning Length.** Where awnings are used on storefronts greater than twenty-five feet in width, one awning shall be provided for each structural bay where such bays exist.



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