

DEVONSHIRE/TOPANGA CORRIDOR

Specific Plan

Ordinance No. 168,937
Effective September 7, 1993

Specific Plan Procedures
Amended pursuant to L.A.M.C. Section 11.5.7

Design Review Board Procedures
Amended pursuant to L.A.M.C. Section 16.50

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DEVONSHIRE/TOPANGA CORRIDOR SPECIFIC PLAN

An ordinance establishing a Specific Plan for the Devonshire/Topanga Corridor.

WHEREAS, the Chatsworth-Porter Ranch Community Plan provides for the development of a Specific Plan for commercial areas along Devonshire Street and Topanga Canyon Boulevard for the purposes of designating land uses, building intensities and heights, parking and landscape requirements, and other improvements in conformance with the Community Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Devonshire/Topanga Corridor through the Chatsworth Community is unique by virtue of the historic background of the area and the adjacent large lot rural residential properties; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to provide for continued economic viability of the area for both residents and businesses alike; and

WHEREAS, in order to create a more unified appearance along the corridor and to protect it from unsightly or inappropriate architectural styles that do not further the goals or objectives of this Specific Plan; and

WHEREAS, in order to assure that development proceeds in an orderly fashion and in conformance with the General Plan of the City of Los Angeles, it is necessary to adopt the following Specific plan;

NOW THEREFORE,

THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SPECIFIC PLAN

- A. The Devonshire/Topanga Corridor Specific Plan is hereby established in the area of the City of Los Angeles as shown on the Map.
- B. Relationship to Other Provisions of the Los Angeles Municipal Code
 1. The regulations of this Specific Plan are in addition to those set forth in the planning and zoning regulations of Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC), as amended, and any other relevant ordinances, and do not convey any rights not otherwise granted under the regulation and procedures contained in that Chapter, and other relevant ordinances except as specifically provided herein.

2. Wherever this Specific Plan contains regulations which require greater setbacks, restricted yards, lower densities, lower heights, restricted uses, greater parking requirements or other greater restrictions or limitations on development than would be allowed pursuant to the regulations contained in LAMC Chapter I, the Specific Plan shall prevail and supersede the applicable provisions of that Code.

Section 2.

PURPOSE

The Devonshire/Topanga Corridor is a significant commercial area. The purposes of this Specific Plan are as follows:

- A. To insure that future commercial development in the area occurs in a manner which is compatible with the surrounding residential community and with the capacity of the circulation system as defined in the Chatsworth - Porter Ranch Community Plan;
- B. To enhance the aesthetic qualities of development within the Chatsworth Corridor by the establishment of uses in conformance with the provisions of the C4 Zone;
- C. To protect existing commercial areas from intrusions of poor quality, or inappropriate industrial-type land uses;
- D. To assure that development within the Specific Plan area incorporates design characteristics that provide a unifying element to the Devonshire/Topanga Corridor Specific Plan area;
- E. To regulate the intensity of development within the area and to assure that adequate off-street parking is provided;
- F. To preserve, to the maximum extent possible, mature and healthy trees and to introduce new vegetation within the Specific Plan area;
- G. To promote orderly, attractive, and harmonious development, minimize negative environmental effects of development, stabilize land values and investments and promote the general welfare by prohibiting buildings, structures, or uses which are inconsistent with the purposes or standards of this Specific Plan or which are inappropriate to their sites, surroundings, traffic circulation impacts or their environmental settings; and
- H. To adequately buffer nearby single-family residential uses from all new development to the extent feasible.

Section 3.

DEFINITIONS

The following words, whenever used in this Ordinance, shall be construed

as defined in this Section. Words and phrases not defined herein shall be construed as defined in LAMC Section 12.03. Words and phrases not defined therein shall be construed as defined in LAMC Chapter IX, if defined therein.

Building Frontage. Any wall of a building or structure which abuts or faces a public street adjacent to the lot on which the building or structure is located.

Extensive Remodeling. The alteration of, or addition to, any existing building or structure in which the aggregate value of such work, in any one twelve-month period, exceeds 75 percent of the building's or structure's replacement value. The valuation shall be determined by the Department of Building and Safety.

Height. The vertical distance measured from the top of the adjacent curb to the highest point of the roof. The height shall include all architectural projections and shall exclude any equipment rooms or heating/air conditioning units attached to the roof or similar equipment as described in Section 12.21.1.

Medical and/or Dental Building. Any building or structure in which more than thirty percent of the floor area is devoted to the examination, diagnosis or treatment of physical or psychological disorders of outpatients.

Open Space. Land which is free of buildings, surface parking for automobiles or trucks or other improvements, except for driveways, walkways or recreational facilities.

Project. The erection, construction, structural alteration of or addition to any building or structure which requires the issuance of a building or grading permit. This term shall include work on architectural projections attached to the exterior walls or roof structures which requires the issuance of a building permit.

Rotating Sign. Any sign in which the sign face revolves in a circular motion on top of the structure on which it is mounted.

Serving Area. The general seating area, including any outdoor seating area, of a restaurant excluding stages, restrooms, storage, kitchens and areas not designated for public use.

Spanish Colonial Architecture. A style of architecture generally distinguished by stucco walls, low-pitched tile roofs, decorative iron work for windows and doors and earth-toned or white in color.

(See Appendix A.)

Western Frontier Heritage Architecture. A variety of architectural styles typically found in California from 1800 to 1900. These architectural styles are described in: Identifying American Architecture by John J. G. Blumenson, American Association for State and Local History, 1977, and/or Historical and Cultural Resource Survey: Survey Guide by the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering, 1980.

Section 4.

LAND USE

All land uses in the Specific Plan area shall be consistent with the land use designations in the Chatsworth-Porter Ranch Community Plan and with the additional regulations in this Specific Plan. For commercially- zoned properties:

A. Any use permitted in the C4 Zone shall be allowed, except on those properties zoned for more restrictive uses, with the following limitations:

1. Buildings and structures used for the following existing uses may undergo Extensive Remodeling. However, such buildings or structures and any additions and enlargements thereto shall be made to conform with the regulations of this Specific Plan:

Automobile laundry or Wash rack (Car wash);
Automobile lubrication station;
Automobile refueling station (Gas station);
Drive-through fast-food establishment;
Contractor's storage yard;
Hospital;
Motel;
Laundry or dry cleaning establishment;
Refreshment stand;

2. The following new uses shall not be permitted:

Automobile refueling station (Gas station);
Contractor's storage yard;
Drive-through fast-food establishment;
Farm machinery sales/service;
Frozen food locker;
Motel;
Mobilehome sales;
Monument and tomb stone sales;
Motorcycle or scooter sales and service;
Parcel delivery service;
Record or tape recording studio;
Refreshment stand;
Repair garage, except that repair garages allowed by LAMC Section 12.16 A 2(u) shall be permitted;

Safe and vault repair;
Scooter storage garage;
Taxi cab business;
Wholesale business.

- B. The provisions related to land use restrictions ("Q"s and "D"s) in Ordinance No. 162,508 are hereby incorporated and made a part of this Specific Plan. That ordinance contains site specific restrictions for Sites A through F. If there is a conflict between that ordinance and this Specific Plan, then the provisions which are more restrictive shall apply.

Section 5.

HEIGHT LIMITS

No building or structure located in whole or in part within the Specific Plan area shall exceed a maximum of 45 feet in height.

The 45-foot height limit as set forth above shall in no way be construed as granting a right not contained within Ordinance No. 162,508 for site specific locations, Sites A through F, and in any case, the more restrictive ordinance shall apply.

Section 6.

LOT COVERAGE

Buildings and structures shall cover no more than 50 percent of the lot. This restriction shall apply to the erection or construction of new buildings or structures, and the addition to any existing building or structure within the Specific Plan area.

Exception: If at least 15 percent of the lot is reserved for and permanently maintained as landscaped Open Space, and if surface parking areas and driveways do not exceed 20 percent of the lot, then up to 65 percent of the lot may be covered by buildings and structures.

Lots that are zoned for commercial uses and with a Height District designation of 2D shall be allowed a maximum floor area ratio of 1.5 to 1.

Section 7.

BUFFERING

A solid decorative masonry wall, a minimum six feet in height, shall be constructed along the property line of any commercially zoned lot if its parking or driveway area is adjacent to a single-family residentially zoned or used lot. The wall shall be constructed along the property line adjacent to the residential lot. There shall be no openings, except for a lockable gate for landscape maintenance work and as may be required by the LAMC. Decorative masonry walls shall mean split-face, slump stone, plaster, brick or stone facing with a top cap. Both sides of the wall must be decorative.

The above requirements shall not apply to a property line bordering a single-family lot, if a wall already exists along that property line or a commercially zoned lot which is separated from single-family zone or used lots by streets, alleys or other public ways.

Section 8.

SETBACKS

Every lot within the Specific Plan area shall maintain a landscaped setback of at least five feet from Devonshire Street and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. This setback may include no more than 150 square feet of driveways and walkways. For lots over 100 feet in width, additional driveways and walkways not exceeding a total of 300 square feet shall be permitted. A minimum of 50 percent of this landscaped setback shall be in vegetation.

Section 9.

LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE STANDARD

A. **Parking Lots.** It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to maintain all landscape features located on private property, including, but not limited to, plant material, signs, walkways, benches, fountains, etc., in accordance with the following criteria: at least ten percent of the total area of an open parking lot shall be landscaped; at least half of the landscaped area shall be with shade-producing trees at a ratio of one tree for every four parking spaces. These trees shall be 24-inch box size and be at least 10 feet tall at the time of planting.

B. **Maintenance**

1. All features (benches, fountains, etc.) shall be maintained in a condition as near as possible to the original state when installed.
2. All landscaped areas shall be equipped with an automatic sprinkler or drip irrigation system designed to conserve water. All vegetation shall be maintained in a first-class condition at all times.

Section 10.

PARKING

A garage or private off-street parking area shall be provided in connection with and at the time of the erection of any building or structure or for the uses hereinafter specified, or at the time any building or structure is Extensively Remodeled, or increased in capacity by the addition of floor area or seating capacity that generates more trips than those generated by the existing use as indicated on the Land Use/Vehicle Trip Table contained in Ordinance No. 161,188.

A. The number of parking spaces required shall be as follows:

1. For commercial and office uses, except as hereafter specified,

one parking space shall be required for each 300 square feet of floor area;

2. For restaurants, one parking space shall be required for each 100 square feet of eating area for outdoor and indoor restaurant uses;
 3. For hospitals, 2.5 parking spaces shall be required for each bed;
 4. For theaters, one parking space shall be required for every three seats;
 5. For gyms, health clubs, aerobic dance studios or similar uses, one parking space shall be required for each 100 square feet of floor area;
 6. For beauty salons, nail salons, hairdressers, barber shops and similar uses, one parking space shall be required for each 100 square feet of floor area.
- B. For lots of 10,000 square feet or less, no parking shall be permitted in front of a building fronting on a major highway.
- C. To further assist in alleviating parking congestion within the corridor, commercial property owners are encouraged to apply for a conditional use for the use of certain adjacent residentially-zoned lots for parking purposes. This recommendation applies to those residentially zoned lots on both sides of Devonshire Street westerly of Oklahoma Avenue which have frontage on streets that are perpendicular to Devonshire Street.
- D. Parking Buildings
1. Parking buildings or structures shall be limited to two stories in height above the existing grade, measured at the curb. They shall be enclosed and roofed and in no instance shall parking be allowed on the roof.
 2. For a parking building or structure erected or constructed adjacent to any lot zoned for or developed with a single-family use, as part of its review of the Project, the Design Review Board shall make a finding as to whether the parking building or structure will be compatible with the adjacent single-family use.

- E. If a Project consists of a change of use, Extensive Remodeling or an addition to an existing building or structure, which increases the Height, floor area, number of dwelling units, or number of guest rooms, then the parking requirements of this Section shall apply to:
 - 1. The square footage of floor area devoted to the change of use, or
 - 2. The square footage of floor area contained within the Extensively Remodeled building or addition to the existing building or structure.

Section 11.

DRIVEWAY REVIEW

Prior to the issuance of building permits for the erection, construction or Extensive Remodeling of any building or structure within the Specific Plan area, access driveway plans shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Engineering.

Any plans relating to access to any commercially-zoned lot in the Specific Plan area shall be subject to the review and approval of the District Office of the Bureau of Engineering and Department of Transportation. This review shall also include a determination by the Department of Transportation, pursuant to LAMC Section 80.14 relating to left-turn movements either entering or exiting commercially-zoned properties.

Section 12.

SIGNS

A. General Sign Provisions and Prohibitions

- 1. The Department of Building and Safety shall not issue a permit for a sign unless it complies with this Section. All signs shall comply with the provisions of LAMC Chapter IX, Article 1, Division 62.
 - 2. The following signs and sign types are prohibited in the Specific Plan area:
 - a. Projecting signs;
 - b. Flashing signs;
 - c. Rotating Signs;
 - d. Banner signs;
 - e. Temporary signs.
- B. The combined sign area of all permanent on-site signs facing a street shall not exceed two square feet for each one foot of linear street frontage of the lot.

- C. **Pole Signs.** All on-site pole signs in the Specific Plan area shall conform to the following:
1. The overall height of a pole sign shall not exceed 15 feet for every 25 feet of linear street frontage in excess of 50 feet and shall not exceed a maximum height of 30 feet.
 2. The area of a pole sign, as viewed from any one direction, shall not exceed 75 square feet plus 15 square feet for each additional business over five businesses identified on an individual pole sign. However, in no event shall the total area of the pole sign exceed 150 square feet.
 3. The sign face of any pole sign shall be contained in one continuous area.
- D. **Off-Site Signs.** All off-site signs in the Specific Plan area shall conform to the following:
1. Existing legally-erected off-site signs may be relocated, provided that the new location otherwise meets all requirements of Division 62 relating to off-site signs.
 2. With the exception of Paragraph 1 above, no new off-site sign shall be erected within the Devonshire/Topanga Specific Plan area.
- E. **Amortization**
1. All temporary signs which are made nonconforming by this Section shall be completely removed within 90 days from the effective date of this Specific Plan.
 2. If a nonconforming sign is damaged or partially destroyed by fire, flood, earthquake or other natural disaster to the extent of more than 50 percent of its replacement value at the time of the damage or destruction, repair of the damage or destruction involves more than sign face replacement and the sign has not been repaired within 30 days of the date of the damage or destruction, then the damaged sign shall be totally removed within 45 days of the date of the damage or destruction.
 3. Ninety days after the cessation of a business activity, service, or product whose sign was lawfully erected, any related signs shall be removed, or the face or the sign shall be removed and replaced with blank panels or shall be painted out. This provision shall not apply to a sign which qualifies as an "advertising display" as defined in Section 5202 of the California Business and Professions Code.

All roof-mounted, pole-mounted, or free-standing equipment, i.e., mechanical, electronic, solar and/or ductwork on any building above the roof ridge or parapet wall, whichever is higher, shall be screened from the horizontal view of residentially zoned or used properties, and from the street with materials compatible with the design of the building.

Section 14.

UNDERGROUND UTILITIES

Where available, new construction shall make provisions in the design phase to provide connections for public utilities underground.

Section 15.

LIGHTING

- A. All exterior light fixtures shall be shielded to minimize illumination of adjacent properties and to reduce glare. Flood-lighting of buildings shall be prohibited. All exterior lighting, except for purposes of safety, security, and to illuminate signs and existing billboards, shall be turned off at the end of business hours.
- B. Off-street parking areas shall be lighted with lights having an illumination of not less than 2.0 foot candles averaged over the entire parking area.

Section 16.

DESIGN REVIEW

- A. **Jurisdiction.** No building permit shall be issued for any Project, except for single-family residences and signs, unless the project has been reviewed and approved in accordance with the Design Review Board Procedures of Section 16.50 of the LAMC and the applicable Specific Plan procedures of Section 11.5.7.

The City Planning Commission shall review the Design Review Board function after one year of its operation, and shall consider recommendations for changes within 60 days of that review.

- B. **The Devonshire/Topanga Specific Plan Design Review Board**
 - 1. **Composition.** The Devonshire-Topanga Design Review Board shall consist of seven voting members. The voting members shall be appointed by the Councilmember of the District encompassing the Specific Plan area and shall live or work in Chatsworth within zip code areas 91311 or 91313.

- C. **Design Review Procedures**

A Specific Plan Project Permit Compliance Review in accordance with Section 11.5.7.C is required for projects that are not exempt and which

comply with the Devonshire-Topanga Specific Plan. Projects that do not comply with the Specific Plan shall be reviewed in accordance with Section 11.5.7.E., F., or G, of the LAMC. Modifications shall be reviewed in accordance with Section 11.5.7.D, and interpretations under Section 11.5.7.H.

Recommendations of Design Review Board.

The Design Review Board shall make its recommendation based upon the following criteria:

- a. All Projects shall conform to the provisions of this Specific Plan.
- b. All signs relating to the Project shall conform to the provisions of this Specific Plan.
- c. Western Frontier Heritage or Spanish Colonial style of architecture as described in Appendix A shall be given primary consideration.
- d. All proposed buildings or structures shall be designed in such a fashion that all ventilation, heating or air conditioning ducts, tubes, equipment, or other related appurtenances are adequately screened from public view.
- e. Any exterior treatment of a building or structure including color, texture, windows, or other architectural features shall be applied to all exterior walls in a similar manner.
- f. The exterior building components, art works, sun shading devices, lighting plan and fixtures should be compatible with the general rural character of the area by conforming to the Western Frontier Heritage or the Spanish Colonial design.
- g. The proposed buildings or structures shall be designed so as to minimize shadows on adjacent property in accordance with Government Code Section 66475.3.
- h. Buildings and structures shall be oriented to maximize the landscaped areas and public spaces and to minimize obstruction of mountain views.
- i. The size of proposed buildings or structures shall be similar in scale to surrounding buildings or structures and shall be appropriate to the character of the Chatsworth area.
- j. All open areas not utilized for buildings, driveways, parking areas, recreational facilities, or walks shall be landscaped so that commercial uses are substantially buffered from the view of single-family residences.

- k. Landscape design and plant types shall be compatible with the building design, site located and the general character of the area.

Section 17.

SEVERABILITY

If any provision or clause of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect other Ordinance provisions, clauses or applications thereof which can be implemented without the invalid provisions, clause or application, and to this end the provisions and clauses of this Ordinance are declared to be severable.

APPENDIX A

Design Guidelines and Design Elements for Buildings and Landscaping

Note: Examples of the Spanish Colonial Architecture style are shown on the following page. Additional examples can be found in the following documents which are on file in the Department of City Planning and at the Public Library, or are available from their source:

Historical and Cultural Resources Survey: Survey Guide, City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering, 1980.

Guidelines - El Pueblo Viejo District, Santa Barbara, California, City of Santa Barbara, Landmarks Committee, 1987.

"The Spanish Colonial Revival Style", *The Old House Journal*, October 1982, p. 198.

Volume

Building volumes should feature a dominance of smooth stucco surfaces with traditional projections and recessions.

Wall Surfaces

Wall surfaces should to convey a structure of stone, brick or adobe through suggestion of thickness (mass).

Stucco is the preferred surface cover; adobe and stone are also encouraged where such surface material is compatible with the design of the building.

Stucco surfaces are to be treated in a flat manner to create a relatively smooth tactile surface, suggestive of a masonry structure behind.

Colors

Colors for wall surfaces should not be harsh, glaring, or bright. White and ivory are the preferred colors.

Trim colors, including ironwork, should be dark.

Roofs

Simple low pitched gable and shed roofs are preferred. All flat roofs should be surrounded by a parapet which is of a height which will hide any rooftop equipment.

Red cap and pan tile is the preferred roofing material.

Projecting cupolas, towers, and varied chimney forms are encouraged; in many cases such roof projections can be used to house ventilation and other rooftop equipment.

Ground Surfaces

The surfaces should be broken up into appropriately scaled geometric patterns which are related to the design of the building.

Brick, tile, and stone are the preferred surface materials. Where concrete

is used, it should be appropriately colored and textured.

Windows and Doors

Openings should be designed to suggest the thickness of traditional masonry wall surfaces.

Doors and windows should be recessed away from the outer wall surfaces.

Materials used for door and window frames, and for door and window mullions, are to be of wood or traditional metal, such as iron. Untreated or anodized aluminum is not appropriate.

Glass areas should be broken up by mullions so that their scale is compatible with the building.

Windows may be covered externally with appropriately designed metal grilles. Untreated or anodized aluminum is not appropriate.

Arches

Full arches of appropriate scale are preferred to segmented or pointed arches.

Generally, arches should spring from traditionally detailed columns, piers or pilasters.

Careful consideration should be given to the wall surface above the arch, so that sufficient wall surface is present between the key of the arch and the next architectural element above.

Other Elements

The following elements may be incorporated into exterior design. These elements should be scaled and treated in a traditional design manner:

- lintels
- columns, piers and pilasters
- cornices and entablatures
- paseos
- arcades and loggias
- balconies
- exterior staircases
- metal work, such as wrought iron lanterns
and sign brackets
- awnings