

# STAFF DESIGN REVIEW FOR CREATIVE SIGN RECORD OF DECISION

**Date:** June 15, 2016

**Project Address:** 633 North Central Avenue  
"Altana Apartments" Multi-Family Residential Project

**Case No:** PDR 1608336

**Applicant:** CP IV Glendale, LLC

**Sign Consultant:** Outdoor Dimensions

**Project Design Review Team:** Vilia Zemaitaitis, Senior Planner  
Alan Loomis, Deputy Director for Urban Design & Mobility

**Decision:** *APPROVE*

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## SUMMARY

The following is an evaluation of the proposed creative sign for the new multi-family residential project, located at 633 North Central Avenue, with regards to GMC Section 30.47.040.H of the Zoning Code and based on drawings prepared by Outdoor Dimensions, dated October 1, 2015. This application and decision specifically deals with the proposed creative wall sign facing Central Avenue. The site is located in the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) zone, yet not within the former Central Glendale Redevelopment Project area; therefore, the creative sign is under the review authority of the Director of Community Development, per GMC 30.47.030.F.

## Background and Context

On November 13, 2013, City Council approved the design review of the Altana Apartments project ("Project"), consisting of a total of 507 multi-family residential units within two independent buildings constructed on opposite sides of Central Avenue at the Doran Street intersections. The 5-story building on Site A on the west side of Central Avenue (subject site) includes 315 apartment units, while the 5-story building on Site B on the east side of Central Avenue includes 192 apartment units. Site A is located in the 600 block of North Central Avenue and is bounded on the north by Pioneer Drive, on the east by Central Avenue, on the south by Doran Street, and on the west by the new Doran Gardens residential project and park, and a two story multi-family building. The subject Site A site is 3.46 acres (or 150,703 SF) and was previously developed with two 3-story medical office buildings, surface parking lots, and a 2-story multi-family residential building. The Project is currently under construction.

## Project Description

The proposed creative sign is an 80 square-foot to be installed at the top of the elevator tower facing Central Avenue at the terminus of Doran Street. The sign has been designed in a sunburst pattern with two extruded layers of "rays" of different metallic colors that project up to nine inches from the face of the building. The rays will be a metallic orange and yellow, while the stanchion offsets will be a dark charcoal grey to blend in with the porcelain tile behind the sign. The "starburst" will be backlit.

## Environmental Impact

The proposed creative sign is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15301, Class 1: Operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing structures of facilities not expanding existing uses.

## DESIGN ANALYSIS

The following is an evaluation of the proposed creative sign with regards to GMC Section 30.47.040.H of the Zoning Code that requires that the review authority consider the following design review criteria for creative signs:

1. Contextual Criteria. *The sign shall meet at least one of the following criteria:*
  - a. *The sign shall be at a location identified for a "landmark architectural feature" as identified in Figure 4-C of the Downtown Specific Plan.*

DSP Section 4.2.6 and Figure 4-C calls for a landmark architectural feature on the west side Central, aligned with the terminus of Doran Street. The approved project acknowledges this terminated vista with a glass-enclosed elevator tower and an exaggerated box-like frame on the top floor that frames outward views from the rooftop pool deck, giving this view corridor an appropriate landmark architectural feature. The proposed creative sign is located at the top of the elevator tower and would provide a focal point to this element at the terminus of Doran Street.
  - b. *The sign shall be located on an "Entertainment Street" frontage identified in Figure 4-A of the Downtown Specific Plan.*

This criterion does not apply to the proposed sign.
  - c. *The sign shall be located within a plaza or paseo identified in Figure 5-A of the Downtown Specific Plan.*

This criterion does not apply to the proposed sign.
  - d. *The sign shall be a creative image reflecting the current or historic character of the city or neighborhood.*

This criterion does not apply to the proposed sign.
  - e. *The sign shall be of a classic historic design style.*

The proposed sunburst sign is reminiscent of iconic form prominent during the mid-century era.
2. Design Criteria. *The sign shall contain at least one of the following elements:*
  - a. *Inventive representation of the name or logo of the structure, building or use on the site.*

The proposed gold-colored sunburst sign represents the logo and colors of the Altana Apartments as utilized throughout the marketing materials and other leasing paraphernalia.
  - b. *Symbols or imagery relating to the entertainment, creative, or design industries.*

The proposed sunburst sign is reminiscent of iconic form prominent during the mid-century design era and is further enhanced by the multi-metallic rays, offset from the building wall and backlit for added emphasis at night.
3. Design Quality. *The sign shall:*
  - a. *Provide strong graphic and artistic character through the imaginative use of graphics, color, texture, quality materials, scale, and proportion;*
  - b. *Utilize or enhance the architectural elements of the building; and*
  - c. *Be placed in a logical and proportional location in relation to the overall composition of the building's façade and not cover any key architectural features and details.*

In response to 3a, b and c, the proposed sign is an approximately 80 square-foot sunburst form of various metallic colors and offset "rays" that are further emphasized at night by backlit lighting. The materials and colors are durable and/or appropriate. The shape of the sign provides a strong visual graphic at the top of the of the glass-enclosed elevator tower, which along with the adjacent exaggerated box-like frame above the building's parapet, provides an appropriate landmark architectural feature aligned with the terminus of Doran Street. The sign will remain readily visible for vehicular and pedestrian traffic traveling/looking westbound along Doran, and traveling north and south along Central Avenue. The size and scale of the sign fit well within the features of the elevator tower and the placement is appropriate.

**PROJECT SUMMARY and DETERMINATION**

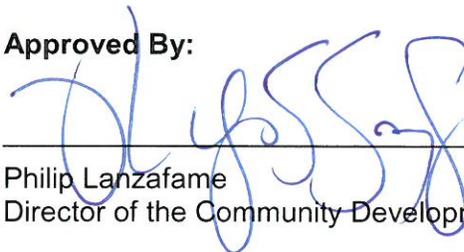
The proposed creative sign for Altana Apartments has been reviewed by the Community Development Department Urban Design Studio ("Design Studio"), which has determined that the creative sign complies with the above required findings and appropriately fulfills the objectives of providing a unique sunburst design that exhibits a high degree of thoughtfulness, while making a positive visual contribution to the project site and Downtown. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the creative sign.

**This is a letter of approval of the project design only. This approval does not constitute an approval of compliance with the Zoning Code and/or Building Code Requirements.**

Prior to Building and Safety Division plan check submittal, approved plans must be stamped approved by Design Review Board staff. Prior to Building and Safety Division plan check submittal, all changes in substantial conformance with approved plans must be on file with the Planning Division.

Please make an appointment with the case planner for DRB stamp/sign-off prior to submitting for Building plan check.

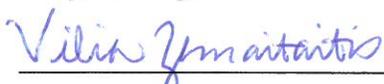
**Approved By:**



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Philip Lanzafame  
Director of the Community Development Department

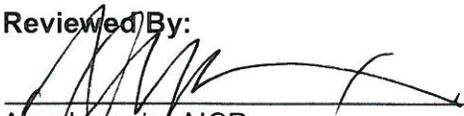
**Prepared By:**



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Vilia Zemaitytis, AICP  
Senior Planner

**Reviewed By:**



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Alan Loomis, AICP  
Deputy Director for Urban Design & Mobility

Attachment: Sign Plans, prepared by Outdoor Dimensions, dated October 1, 2015

cc: Mark Berry, Principal Development Officer  
File