



## TOWN OF APPLE VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

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**To:** Honorable Mayor and Town Council **Date:** September 25, 2018  
**From:** Lori Lamson **Item No:** 10  
Assistant Town Manager  
**Subject:** DISCUSSION REGARDING THE USE OF EXPOSED METAL  
CONSTRUCTION  
Applicant: Town of Apple Valley

**T.M. Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Budgeted Item:** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

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### RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive and file

### SUMMARY:

Mayor Pro Tem Cusack requested that the use of exposed metal in non-residential construction be discussed by the Town Council. Currently the Development Code only allows the use of exposed metal materials with the Planning Commission approval of a Development Permit. In the North Apple Valley Industrial Specific Plan, exposed metal materials in new construction, requires a Conditional Use Permit. Each of these entitlements requires that Planning Commission make findings, which typically pertain to the architecture and design enhancing the visual environment and that the design is compatible with the area.

The original intent of these requirements was to discourage metal structures such as butler buildings and the use of corrugated metal. The use of exposed metal in Apple Valley has not been common and typically not part of the desert design that has been historically developed in the Town. The Development Code refers to traditional values, which could be interpreted as traditional design.

Section 9.37.080.A.1 of the Development Code discusses *Architecture* and provides general description of what is expected for new development. In addition Section 9.37.080.F.2 identifies the types of building materials to be used to reflect the desert environment.

## **Section 9.37.080 Architecture**

### **A. General**

1. *Architecture should reflect the Town's desert setting and long term traditional values. Building design options should be compatible with existing development to the greatest extent possible.*

### **F. Building Materials**

2. *New development shall be encouraged to utilize adobe, stucco, smooth plasters, earthen color block, natural stone, wood and terra cotta tile as the dominant building materials in response to the Town's desert environment. The use of metal on the exterior of any portion of a structure constructed on site, or structures assembled from modular or similar units on site, or structures assembled off site and moved on site as one unit, may use metal exteriors when the Planning Commission determines, during a project's Development Permit or Conditional Use Permit review, that the proposed structure shall have an appearance emulating and simulating the color, texture and appearance of other structures within the surrounding area or where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposed structure shall be an enhancement to the surrounding area. Said metal exterior must provide the same texture depth and other physical characteristics as the exterior of the main structure on the surrounding properties.*

Metal materials have significantly improved over time. The market now has materials that simulate other traditional materials, such as wood siding, stucco and shingles. Also, modern, contemporary design has become more popular and trend setting. Metal materials has also led the competition in being more energy efficient. These Development Code Sections may not accurately reflect changes in technology, the need for energy efficiency and current trends that encourage more contemporary design.

Over the past 10 years, the Town Council, Planning Commission and staff have reviewed and approved different uses of metal throughout Town. Industrial buildings, medical buildings and accents on commercial buildings have been considered appropriate and contributing toward the high architectural standards we require in the Town. In addition, several metal roof materials have been considered acceptable by the Planning Commission.

The Development Permit process can be administratively approved for buildings under 50,000 square feet. Buildings larger than this require approval by the Planning Commission. Because of the subjectivity in determining the appropriate use of exposed metal, staff has been very conservative in interpreting the appropriate use of metal and adhering to the direction provided in the Development Code Section shown above. Some cases that could have been administratively approved, have been referred to the Planning Commission for review. Typically there is Planning Commission review when the amount of metal used is a significant part of the elevations of a building. A Conditional Use Permit automatically requires the review and approval of the Planning Commission.

The Town does not have design criteria for the use of exposed metal and that may be necessary to develop if the Town wants to encourage administrative approval or reducing the entitlement process. With changes in technology, better products are available that are architecturally compatible and aesthetically pleasing. In addition, these new products are usually more energy efficient than traditional materials.

If the discussion of this issue leads to changes necessary in the Development Code and/or the creation of design guidelines, a Development Code Amendment would need to be initiated and referred to the Planning Commission for recommendation.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Not Applicable