

URBAN CODE HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 Purpose and Intent	2
2.0 User's Guide	2
3.0 Administration	3
4.0 Zoning Classification	4
5.0 Streetscape Design	7
6.0 Urban Open Space	9
7.0 Site Design	12
8.0 Building Design Standards	19
9.0 Signage	27
10.0 Definitions	29
11.0 Maintenance	29





1.0 PURPOSE AND INTENT



The purpose of these Design Guidelines is to enact regulations that implement the vision and goals of The Renaissance Plan for the Heart of Wake Forest.

These Design Guidelines are intended to attach the same or greater level of importance to the overall building and site design as is placed on the use contained within to facilitate the creation of a convenient, safe, and attractive community. Buildings are expected to be added to Downtown Wake Forest as long-term additions to the architectural vibrancy of the community for the purpose of encouraging economic development activities that enlarge the tax base by providing desirable residences and places of shopping, employment and public assembly.

These Design Guidelines encourage the placement of buildings closer to each other as well as closer to the street where pedestrian activity is expected to occur. As the sidewalks remain the principal place of pedestrian movement and casual social interaction, designs and uses should be complementary of that function. This encourages pedestrian activity by providing an attractive destination and an interesting journey thereby reducing congestion and improving the overall quality of life in the Town of Wake Forest.

2.0 USER'S GUIDE

This Renaissance Area Urban Code replaced the H-CBD and CBD districts in the Zoning Ordinance and on the Zoning Map. Rezoning of the planning area and text amendments were completed in a manner that is both consistent with the Renaissance Plan and permits some flexibility in varying the ideas set forth in the Conceptual Plan.

Users of this document will notice that this Urban Code have been ordered in a manner that addresses the standards for the most public realm, the street, to the most private realm, the building. As a design becomes more detailed and moves from the subdivision plan to the site plan to the building elevation, users are encouraged to progress through the document.

The guiding principle of this Urban Code is that the use of the property, while important, is subordinated to the design of the building within which it is contained. This permits a greater deal of visual compatibility while encouraging mixed uses to be in close proximity of one another.



3.0 ADMINISTRATION

3.1 APPLICABILITY & APPROVAL PROCESS

To encourage compliance with the standards of this Urban Code as well as the vision and goals of The Renaissance Plan for the heart of Wake Forest, all site plans shall be reviewed by the Planning Board and approved by the Wake Forest Board of Commissioners.

The standards described or referenced in this section shall apply to all development, including new construction, renovations, remodelings, face lifts, repainting, and additions to existing structures within the zoning jurisdiction of the Town of Wake Forest. All such projects shall require that a Development Permit be obtained from the Planning and Inspections Office prior to beginning the project.

The supplementary district regulations stated in Article VI of the zoning ordinance shall apply to the Renaissance Area Districts except as modified in these standards.

3.2 MODIFICATION OF STANDARDS

The Planning Director or his designee may make modifications to the standards found in this Urban Code upon the written request of the applicant if the standard(s) in question conflicts with other requirements by law, as long as the proposal is in compliance with the Purpose and Intent of these standards given above. If the applicant and Planning Director or his designee cannot come to an agreement, the proposal shall be submitted to the Planning Board for recommendation on the next available agenda and to the Board of Commissioners for final decision.

3.3 CONFLICTING REQUIREMENTS

Where these requirements conflict with each other or with any requirement of the Zoning Ordinance or Subdivision Regulations, the stricter or more appropriate urban design standards shall apply, as determined by the Planning Director. Any modifications necessary shall be made with the approval of the Planning Director or his designee.



4.0 ZONING CLASSIFICATION

4.1 RENAISSANCE AREA DISTRICTS

In accordance with The Renaissance Plan, the area has been reclassified into three areas as follows:

A. Historic Core (RA-HC)

The Historic Core of the Renaissance Area permits the sensitive continuation of the “Main Street” environment of White Street and its secondary streets. The ground floor of buildings on White Street should be comprised of active uses including retail or restaurants with office and residential located on second stories. Side streets east of White Street may have a greater variety of ground floor uses.

B. Urban Center (RA-UC)

As with the Historic Core, the Urban Center accommodates an active, pedestrian-friendly area of commercial, residential, office, and civic uses in both vertically mixed-use, as well as free-standing buildings. Retail should be placed at street level, with residential uses in rear or upper stories. Larger buildings are more easily accommodated in this area due to the presence of larger parcels.

C. Campus (RA-C)

The Campus area, while predominately comprised of civic, assembly, and institutional uses is encouraged to be mixed-use in overall composition while maintaining a close integration with the natural surroundings. Streets in this area should be planted with a regular spacing of canopy trees and parking lots should be away from the pedestrian realm.



4.2 SUMMARY TABLE OF URBAN PROVISIONS

	Historic Core RA-HC	Urban Center RA-UC	Campus RA-C
Lot Dimensions			
Front Setback (min)	0 feet	0 feet	10 feet
Front Setback (max)	5 feet	15 feet	25 feet
Side Setback	0 feet	0 feet	6 feet
Rear Setback (no alley)	0 feet	20 feet	20 feet
Rear Setback (measured from centerline of alley)	0 feet from edge of alley pavement	15 feet	15 feet
Encroachments	Balconies, stoops, stairs, chimneys, open porches, bay windows, and raised doorways are permitted to encroach into the front setback. Upper story balconies may encroach into the right-of-way up to 3 feet with permission from the Town.		
Height			
Minimum	16 Feet	n/a	n/a
Maximum	4 Stories up to 60 ft. (3 Stories along White Street from Elm to Roosevelt)	3 Stories up to 45 ft.	3 Stories up to 45 ft.
Parking Requirements (Minimum)			
Residential	None	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
Lodging	None	1 space per room	1 space per room
All other uses (Adjacent public parking or a public parking lot or public parking deck across the street may count toward this requirement.)	None	1 per 300 square feet	1 per 300 square feet



4.3 SUMMARY TABLE OF PERMITTED AND SPECIAL USES

	Historic Core RA-HC	Urban Center RA-UC	Campus RA-C
Residential	Multi-Family Homes Loft Apartments	Multi-Family Homes Loft Apartments	Multi-Family Homes (Town Homes, Condos, & Apts) Loft Apartments
Lodging	Bed & Breakfast* Hotels & Inns*	Bed & Breakfast* Hotels & Inns*	Bed & Breakfast*
Retail	Retail Uses Convenience Store (no pumps)* Shopping Centers* Recreation Centers /Amusements* Food Sales & Service	Retail uses Shopping Centers* Recreation Centers /Amusements* Food Sales & Service Convenience Store (no pumps) Self-Storage Facility* Day Care Centers*	Retail Uses Shopping Centers* Recreation Centers /Amusements* Food Sales & Service Convenience Store (no pumps) Gas Station* Self-Storage Facility* Day Care Centers
Office/Service	Professional Office Home Occupations Personal Services Professional/Business Services Repair Services	Professional Office Home Occupations Personal Services Professional/Business Services Repair Services	Professional Office Home Occupations Personal Services Professional/Business Services Repair Services
Manufacturing	None permitted	None permitted	None permitted
Civic/Assembly	Civic/Assembly Uses Public Facilities	Civic/Assembly Uses Public Facilities	Civic/Assembly Uses Public Facilities
Other	Accessory Use/Building	Accessory Use/Building	Accessory Use/Building Essential Services* Wholesale Trade* Warehousing*

** **Special Uses:** After due notice and hearing and subject to conditions, and safeguards to be fixed by the Board of Commissioners, based on a recommendation of the Planning Board in each case a Special Use Permit may be granted by the Board of Commissioners for uses listed below, subject to the requirements of Article VIII, Section 2 of the Zoning Ordinance.*



5.0 STREETSCAPE DESIGN

Street designs in the Downtown should permit the comfortable use of the street by cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Pavement widths, design speeds, and the number of vehicle lanes should be minimized without compromising safety. The specific design of any given street must consider the building which fronts on the street and the relationship of the street to the Town’s street network. New streets shall be required to be compatible with the Pedestrian and Bike plans, when complete. As preexisting streets are upgraded they shall be made compatible, to the extent practical, with the Pedestrian and Bike plans, when complete.

5.1 Connectivity: Streets shall interconnect within a development and with adjoining development. Street stubs should be provided with development adjacent to open land to provide for future connections. Streets shall be planned with due regard to the designated corridors shown on the Renaissance Plan.

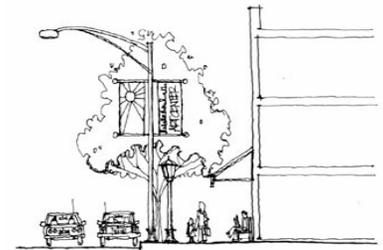
5.2 Streetscape Design

All new development or expansions to existing development shall be required to upgrade their street frontage in accordance with the following standards:

	Historic Core	Urban Center	Campus
On-Street Parking	Parallel or Diagonal	Parallel or Diagonal	Parallel or Diagonal
Curb Return Radii (maximum)	15 feet	20 feet	20 feet
Curbs and Drainage	Standard Curb Closed Drainage	Standard Curb Closed Drainage	Standard Curb Open/Closed Drainage
Tree Spacing (minimum of 1)	50 feet Average	40 feet Average	40 feet minimum
Planting Strip Type	Planting Wells	Wells or a Continuous Strip	Continuous Strip
Minimum Planting Strip Width	n/a	6 feet	8 feet
Sidewalk Width (minimum)	10 feet	12 ft – Retail 8 ft – Office 5 ft – Residential	5 feet

5.3 General Provisions

- 1. On-Street Parking:** On-street parking provided shall be parallel. Angle parking is permitted in front of high traffic retail locations and where the posted traffic speed is 20 mph or less and/or on one-way streets.
- 2. Curb-Return Radii:** Curb radii shall be designed to reduce pedestrian crossing times along all streets requiring sidewalks. In general, curb radii should not exceed 20 ft.



A typical streetscape in The Renaissance Area with on-street parking, lighting, street trees, seating, and sidewalks. (Ref. 6.3.1)



3. Curbs and Drainage: Curbs shall be constructed in accordance with town standards. Standard curbing is required along all streets with on-street parking and around all required landscaping areas and parking lots. Mountable curbing is permitted around center medians, roundabouts, and other features in order to facilitate the infrequent use by vehicles with larger turning radii. Drainage shall be provided using curb and gutter piped systems along all streets. All drainage grates, if provided, must be safe for bicyclists (grating must be perpendicular or diagonal to the street centerline).

4. Traffic Calming: The use of traffic calming devices such as landscaping bulb-outs and roundabouts are encouraged as alternatives to conventional traffic control measures.

5. Street Trees/Planting Strips: Landscaping, including street trees and planting strips, shall meet town standards. Streets should be designed with street trees planted in a manner appropriate to their function. Commercial streets shall have trees which compliment the face of the buildings and which shade the sidewalk. They should therefore be planted at property lines or at side property lines along the frontage.

In the RA-Campus, streets should have an appropriate canopy which shades both the street and sidewalk, and serves as a visual buffer between the street and the building.

6. Sidewalks: Sidewalks serving mixed use and commercial areas should be a minimum of 12-15 feet in front of retail uses. (See Table 5.2)

7. Outdoor Seating: Where uses such as outdoor seating for cafés and restaurants use the public sidewalk, there shall be a minimum of 4 feet of clearance for adequate passing distance by pedestrians.



Street trees planted at regular intervals provide continuous shade and a consistent appearance but can conceal storefronts (Ref. 5.3.5)



Opportunity planting of trees between buildings maintains clear visibility of storefronts (Ref. 5.3.5)



Typical sidewalks in the Renaissance Area should be 12-15 feet wide to encourage outdoor seating while providing adequate passing clearance (Ref. 5.3.6 & 7)



6.0 URBAN OPEN SPACE

All development should provide useable urban open space. Examples of useable public open space include: a park or green, outdoor café or restaurant seating, a plaza with seating, a tot lot, a picnic area, or a wide arcade for strolling along store fronts. Public right-of-way, landscaping filled in around buildings and parking lots, and simple paths are not considered useable urban open space. The character and size of the public open space should be influenced by the surrounding uses (e.g. residential, retail, office) as well as by the prospective user groups (e.g. workers, shoppers, and youth).

6.1 Urban Open Space Dedication Requirements:

	Historic Core RA-HC	Urban Center RA-UC	Campus RA-C
Minimum Dedication Requirement			
For Residential-Only Units	none	250 square feet per bedroom unit*	250 square feet per bedroom unit*
For Vertically Mixed-Use Development & Garage Apartments/Cottages	none	none	none
For Non-Residential Only Development	none	5% of Lot*	5% of Lot*

* *The Town may require a payment in lieu of dedicated open space if it deems appropriate.*

Dedication Standards: *For the purposes of this calculation, developers should make a good faith estimate at the time of Development Plan submission. In general, Single-Family Homes are calculated at a rate of 3 bedrooms per unit, unless otherwise specified. Greenways are credited towards this requirement at a rate equal to the length of the path times 16 feet in width.*

6.2 Urban Open Space Standards:

1. Significant stands of trees, streambed areas, and other valuable topographic features shall be preserved within the required open space areas unless technically infeasible. Areas noted on The Renaissance Plan as open space should be preserved and dedicated unless technically infeasible and may be left unimproved in accordance with the Plan.
2. Required public open space shall be separately deeded to either a homeowner's association, a non-profit land trust or conservancy, the Town of Wake Forest, or otherwise permanently protected through deed restriction.
3. **Location:** The design and location of public open space on a site is perhaps the most important determinant in a successful pedestrian environment. To ensure that public open space is well-used, it is essential to locate and design it carefully.



A public space that is enclosed by building frontages around its perimeter is more likely to be safe and well-used, as long as an accessible route is provided. (Ref. 6.2.3)

- Public open space should be fronted by streets and buildings to encourage their use and patrol their safety.



- The space should be located where it is visible and easily accessible from homes and public areas (building entrances, streets, sidewalks).
- Take views and sun exposure into account in design and location.
- The space should be well-buffered from moving cars so that users can enjoy and relax in the space.
- The space may be visible from streets or internal drives but should not be wholly exposed to them.
- Partially enclose the space with building walls, freestanding walls, landscaping, raised planters, or on-street parking to help buffer it and create a comfortable "outdoor room".



Public open space may be raised from the street grade and/or have on-street parking along its perimeter to help define its edges (Ref. 6.2.3)

4. **Public Seating:** Publicly accessible places to sit in the public realm are important not only as basic amenities, but also in sponsoring casual social interaction. Seating can be both formal and informal, including both park benches on the tops of garden walls or monumental stairs at the entrance to public buildings. Planter walls should be set at a maximum height of 2½ feet to allow for their use as seating. Moveable chairs and sidewalk cafes are strongly encouraged. Allow accessible surface spaces for strollers, wheelchairs, etc. adjacent to seating and out of the main pedestrian traffic flow.

5. **Minimum Amenities:**

- 1 tree (2½ inch caliper minimum at installation) for every 1,000 square feet of provided open space to be planted in at least 350 square feet of soil.
- A minimum of 25 linear feet of seating should be provided for every 1,000 square feet of urban open space. Seating should be more than 12 inches and less than 30 inches in height and not less than 16 inches in depth. Seating more than 28 inches in depth and accessible from two sides should count double. Moveable chairs are encouraged and each count as 2½ linear feet of suggested seating.
- At least half of the open space should be at street level.
- Playground equipment, statues, and fountains, if provided, should be located toward the interior of squares and parks.
- One water tap for each 5,000 square feet of each landscaped open space.
- One garbage receptacle for each 5,000 square feet of each physically separated open space, or a minimum of one, meeting town standards.



Provide amenities in the Urban Open Space to encourage its use such as landscaping and seating (Ref. 6.4.3) – Photo by ColeJenest & Stone



- 6. Public Art:** Property owners are encouraged to provide outdoor public art on their property or in the adjacent public right-of-way, to enrich the pedestrian experience and create a stronger sense of place.

Murals displayed by a private business or property owner may be considered. If provided, the mural should be placed on a removable panel and not directly onto the building surface. Such murals may be considered to be signage and count toward the allowable wall sign area.



Place public art is encouraged in urban open spaces (Ref. 6.4.6) – Photo by ColeJenest & Stone

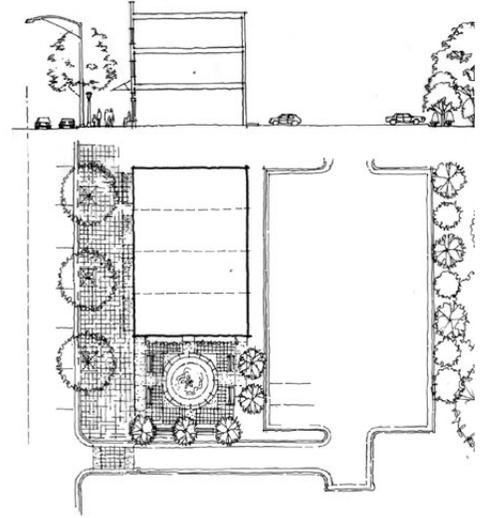


7.0 SITE DESIGN

A primary task of all urban architecture and landscape design is the physical definition of streets and public spaces as places of shared use. Streets lined by buildings rather than parking lots are more interesting to move along, especially for pedestrians and provide a safer environment.

7.1 Building Placement

- 1. Building Frontage:** All buildings shall share a frontage line with a street or public open space. Buildings should be located close to the pedestrian street (generally within 25 feet of the curb), with off-street parking behind and/or beside buildings.
- 2. Corner lots:** If the building is located at a street intersection, place the main building, or part of the building, at the corner. Parking, loading or service should not be located at an intersection.
- 3. Viewshed Protection:** Important vistas and views of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's church steeple shall be protected and accentuated to the extent practical.
- 4. Street Vistas:** Important street vistas (such as along Town gateways and primary pedestrian streets) should terminate in a focal point, such as a building or other architectural or landscaped feature.



Place buildings adjacent to corners and parking to the side or rear (Ref. 7.1)



Preserve views of the Seminary's steeple (Ref. 7.1.3)



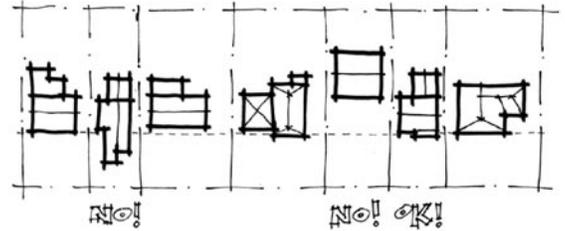
Terminate important views with prominent architecture and/or landscaping (Ref. 7.1.4)



- Setbacks:** Front and side setbacks shall be consistent with those of surrounding buildings. An outdoor “room” may be placed between the building and sidewalk where the building serves as the termination of a pedestrian street, necessitating a larger setback. This type of outdoor “room” serves to open the business to the street and pedestrians and should be accessed from the public sidewalk to be used for customers, (e.g. sidewalk café) or for general public seating (e.g. courtyard). The Renaissance Area Plan has identified the termination of Wait Avenue, Jones Avenue, and East Owen Avenue for such opportunities.

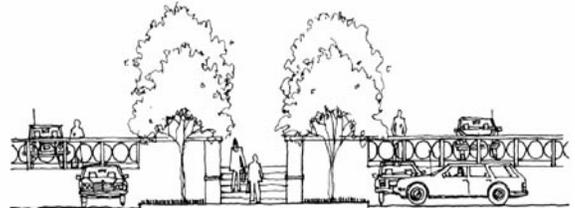
7.2 Infill Lots

- Infill Compatibility:** Unless otherwise specified in The Renaissance Plan, buildings on infill lots shall generally be setback a distance in context with surrounding buildings of the proposed development on the same side of the street. Adjacent buildings shall relate in similarity of scale, height, architectural style, and configuration. Transitions to dissimilar building types (i.e. Detached House to Commercial Buildings) should generally occur at the rear lane/alley, rear property line, or in the next block.



Infill lots should be development in a manner consistent with its neighbors (Ref. 7.1.1)

- Adjacent Lots:** For similarly zoned properties, try to match the grade of abutting properties where the properties meet. If there is a significant grade difference, create an attractive transition, using creative grading and landscaping or a decorative retaining wall. Be sure to incorporate vehicular and pedestrian cross-access. Avoid using a blank or unscreened concrete retaining wall or a rock-covered slope.



Transitions to adjacent lots should, at a minimum, provide for pedestrian access if existing grades are not favorable for full at-grade access. (Ref. 7.1.2)

7.3 Parking and Circulation

1. Minimum Parking Ratios

Parking Requirements (Minimum)*	Historic Core RA-HC	Urban Center RA-UC	Campus RA-C
Residential	None	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
Lodging	None	1 space per room	1 space per room
All other uses	None	1 per 300 square feet	1 per 300 square feet

All square footage is in leasable square feet. Parking requirements may be satisfied using on-street parking in front of buildings or public lots within 300 ft of primary building entrances. Exceeding the minimum parking must be justified with parking studies and standards.

** The Town may approve a payment in lieu of parking or missing spaces in a lot.*

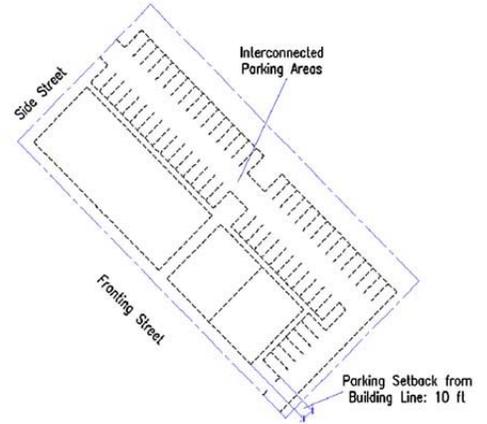


2. **Shared Parking Standards:** The joint use of shared off-street parking between two uses may be made by contract between two or more adjacent property owners. Adjacent lots shall be interconnected where practical.

Developments that operate at different times may jointly use or share the same parking spaces with a maximum of one-half (1/2) of the parking spaces credited to both uses if one use is a church, theater, assembly hall or other use whose peak hours of attendance will be at night or on Sundays, and the other use or uses are ones that will be closed at night or on Sundays or upon the normal hours of operation.

3. **Location of Parking Areas:**

- Parking lots shall be located to the side or behind buildings or in the interior of a block. Parking areas in the side yards shall be located a minimum of 10 feet behind the frontage line of the building.
- Pedestrian and vehicular access from a public street to a parking area at the interior of the block shall be no further apart than a maximum of 400 feet.
- All off-street parking spaces for multi-family buildings shall be in the rear yard only and access to any garages shall be from the rear.



4. **Connectivity:** Adjacent lots should be interconnected except in the case of existing steep topography between the sites.

5. **Parking Area Screening:** All parking areas visible from the right-of-way should be screened from view. Parking areas located in the side yard shall have the portion of the lot that fronts the street screened up to a height of 4 feet using shrubs, brick walls (using brick that matches the adjacent building), wrought iron fencing, stone, cultured stone, or any combination thereof. For public safety, if a fence or wall screening a parking lot is over 4 feet in height that portion above 4 feet shall be pierced for visibility to the interior. If landscaping is used, the minimum planting area width should not be less than 4 feet.



Screen parking lots from the street with a brick wall, wrought-iron fencing, and/or landscaping (Ref. 7.3.2)

6. **Loading and Unloading Spaces:** Any use with a private parking lot will provide space for loading and unloading, meeting town standards. Where an alley is constructed loading areas shall be provided in the alley for rear access to the business. Where there is no alley and no private parking lot one parking space shall be designated for loading on each side of the street per block, if considered feasible by the town planning department, unless the town adopts a delivery time restriction for on-street loading.

6. **Parking Space Dimensions:**



Parking space dimensions shall meet current town standards.

7. Parking Area Landscaping:

A. Maximum Distance from a Parking Space to a Shade Tree Trunk:

The spacing of shade trees shall meet town standards.

B. Required Plantings: 1 Shade Tree per 10 spaces to be located in interior parking lot islands.

8. Parking Structures

A. The ground-level of a parking structure should be wrapped by retail, office or some other active use along at least the primary façade. All levels of a structured parking facility shall be designed and screened in such a way as to minimize visibility of parked cars.

B. Along pedestrian-oriented streets, parking structure facades shall be treated with high quality materials and given vertical articulation and emphasis compatible to the principal structure. The façade shall be designed to visually screen cars. In no instance will rails or cabling alone be sufficient to meet this screening requirement.

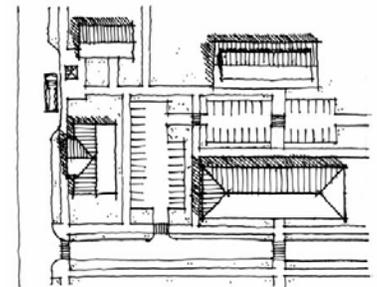
C. Pedestrian entries shall be clearly visible.

D. In addition to the above requirements, in the event that any openings for ventilation, service, or emergency access are located at the first floor level in the building façade, then they shall be an integral part of the overall building design.

7.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Amenities

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Network: Provide a complete network of pedestrian and bicycle paths that interconnect building entrances, parking, transit stops, public sidewalks and crossings, adjacent properties, adjoining off-street paths, and other key destinations on or adjacent to the site. Avoid steps; provide curb ramps to accommodate wheelchairs, bicyclists, and baby strollers. If no immediate benefit can be derived from the pedestrian link, maintain the potential at-grade link and provide a construction easement to the adjoining property.

2. Pedestrian Pathways: Pedestrian pathways should be provided from the street to the parking area between buildings, as necessary to ensure reasonably safe, direct, and convenient access to building entrances and off-street parking. To aid pedestrian navigation and comfort, provide the following elements along paths:



Provide a complete network of pathways and sidewalks (Ref. 7.4.1 & 2)



Pedestrian paths from parking areas should be specially detailed. (Ref. 7.4.2)



- Landscaping, such as rows of trees and shrubs, flower beds, and planters
- Pedestrian scaled lighting, such as lighted bollards
- Small, color-coded way-finding signs, or a directory
- Vertical architectural elements, such as markers or arches
- Seating and resting spots
- Special paving

3. **Crosswalks:** Whenever pathways cross internal drives, curb cuts, and streets, provide a highly-visible crosswalk, made of a material that provides strong contrast with the vehicular surface (e.g. concrete in asphalt, unit pavers in concrete). Crosswalk stripes are acceptable, but require frequent repainting. Consider elevating the crosswalk to the level of the connecting walk. Also use standard warning signs and light fixtures (per the Manual of Traffic Control Devices) to alert drivers to crossings.



Crosswalks should be visually different than drives and streets. (Ref. 7.4.3)

4. **Bicycle Parking:** Wherever auto parking is provided bicycle parking will also be provided, meeting town standards, with a minimum capacity of one bicycle. Inverted U or "Cora"-type racks are suggested though others of similar durability and ease of use may be approved. Bike racks should be located close to the main building entrance(s) so they are highly visible and convenient. To facilitate access, install a curb ramp in any drive near the bike parking.



Bicycle rack in downtown Louisville, KY. (Ref 7.4.4)

7.5 Supplemental Landscaping

The appropriate use of existing and supplemental landscaping fosters unity of design for new development and blends new development with the natural landscape. Quality landscaping is an essential component of the built form of the Town.

The corners of street intersections, particularly gateways and site entries (entries from both street and sidewalk) should be distinguished by special landscape treatments: flower displays, specimen trees and shrubs, accent rocks, low walls, signage, decorative lighting, sculpture, architectural elements, and/or special paving. Features for vehicular entry points must meet the Town's sight triangle requirements.



Add landscaping at key intersections or to mark gateways. (Ref. 7.5)

7.6 Lighting

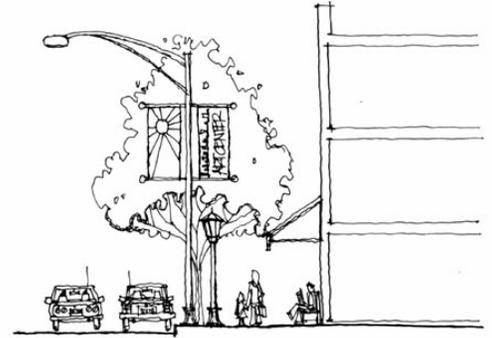
Decorative lighting should be provided as a means of providing a safe and visible pedestrian realm as well as establishing a theme or character for a street. The use of



decorative light fixtures along with a coordinated signage and banner program create a lively pedestrian environment.

1. Public and Private Sectors

- A. Use a low intensity of high-quality light placed close together, which will provide good, uniform visibility while avoiding light pollution.
- B. Use decorative bases, posts, luminaires, and bollards in lieu of standard wood poles.
- C. Architectural accent lighting shall be white in color and be used to highlight architectural features without the lighting, itself, becoming a feature.



Lighting should be provided for the street, the sidewalk, and the storefront. (Ref. 7.6)

2. Public Sector

- A. A lighting program should consider the illumination of sidewalks and other multi-use pathways using low intensity, closely spaced, fixtures that provide an even distribution of light while avoiding areas of intense shadows.
- B. To consolidate the number of fixtures placed within the right-of-way, consider the co-location of light fixtures along with other streetscape elements on single poles (i.e. street lighting, pedestrian lighting, and banners).

3. Private Sector

- A. A substantial amount of supplementary lighting for pedestrians shall be provided from the storefronts using either indirect illumination from within the building or direct illumination under canopies or awnings.
- B. Exterior lights on all sides of buildings will have partial or full cutoff, meeting town standards.
- C. Private parking lots shall be lighted with fixtures with a full 90 degree cutoff, meeting town standards.
- D. Architectural lighting shall be subject to design review the same as other exterior lighting.
- E. Accent Light Strips: Lighting strips are not architectural design features and may only be approved in limited applications to highlight material architectural elements.
 - Only one light strip is allowed per elevation.
 - Light strips shall only be approved as an accent to a horizontal architectural feature.
 - Light strips shall not be applied in vertical bands.
 - Light strips may not span architectural features.



- Light strips shall not be used on canopy structures.
- Light strips may only be installed in translucent soffits or “C” channels when they are designed to blend in with the architectural feature being highlighted. For example, a stone colored “C” channel could be situated beneath a stone look cornice in a manner which extends the cornice as viewed by day, while encasing a light strip that would illuminate white or colored light when viewed in the evening.
- Opaque soffits or “C” channels providing only backlight conditions shall be required when accent colors are used to house the light strip.
- The soffits or “C” channel shall be rigid so as not to sag over the run.
- The light source shall not be visible.
- Neon and other gas tubing are not allowed.

7.7 Utilities and Trash Containment

1. **Underground Wiring:** To reduce the visual impact of overhead wiring, utility services shall be located underground with periodic stub-ups.

2. **Trash Containment Areas:** All trash containment devices, including grease containers, compactors, and dumpsters, shall meet town standards and be located and designed so as not to be visible from the view of nearby streets and properties. Chain link fences are not permitted. Screening materials shall consist of brick, stone, cultured stone, split face CMU, or evergreen vegetation plus concrete bollards. If the device is not visible from off the site, then it need not be screened. The type of screening used shall be determined based on the proposed location of the trash containment area, existing site conditions, and the type and amount of existing and proposed vegetation on the site.



Enclose trash handling areas with a masonry wall or wood fence (Ref. 7.7.2)

3. **Mechanical and Utility Equipment:** Mechanical and utility equipment shall be screened from view from nearby streets and properties in the same manner as trash containment areas. Ground mounted equipment shall be located in the rear or side yard and screened. Such equipment located on the roof of the building shall also be made invisible from nearby streets and properties, through the use of parapet walls or setbacks from the edge of the roof or through the use of a screen exceeding the height of the equipment and using building materials and design which are compatible with those used for the exterior of the building. If the equipment is not visible at pedestrian height from nearby sites then it need not be screened. The type of screening used shall be determined based on the proposed location of the equipment, existing site conditions, and the type and amount of existing and proposed vegetation on the site.



8.0 BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS

The rich, architectural vocabulary of the Town of Wake Forest presents a wide variety of development opportunities using traditional forms while avoiding any perception of monotony. Buildings that are stylized in an attempt to use the building itself as advertising are not acceptable, particularly where the proposed architecture is the result of a “corporate” or franchise style. In the case of a historic building the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation will be used as a guideline for exterior work.

8.1 General Building Design Principles

1. **Scale:** Building design shall emphasize a human scale at ground level, at entryways, and along street frontages through the creative use of such features as windows, doors, columns, canopies, arcades, and awnings.
2. **Massing:** A single, large, dominant building mass shall be avoided. Where large structures are required, mass shall be broken up through the use of setbacks, projecting and recessed elements, and similar design techniques.
3. **Height:** Infill structures shall conform to the average height of surrounding structures, with taller portions of the new building set back in order to maintain the established street pattern and access to light.
4. **Avoiding Monotony:** Monotony of design in single or multiple building projects shall be avoided by varying detail, form and siting to the maximum extent practicable, within the standards set forth in these requirements.
5. **Unify Individual Storefronts:** If several storefronts are located in one building, the individual storefronts shall be unified in all exterior design elements, such as mass, window and door placement, color, materials, and signage while, at the same time, varying the look and providing distinctiveness from storefront to storefront.
6. **Varying Architectural Styles:** In developments with multiple structures of varying architectural styles, buildings shall be compatible by such means as a pattern of architectural features, similar scale and proportions, and consistent location of signage.
7. **Additions and Renovations:** Building additions and facade renovations shall be designed to reflect existing buildings in scale, materials, window treatment, and color. A change in scale may require a transitional design element between the new development and existing buildings. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation shall be a guideline in renovating historic buildings.
8. **Infill Development:** New infill development shall either be similar in size and height or, if larger, be articulated and subdivided into massing that is proportional to the mass and scale of other structures on the same and adjoining blocks.



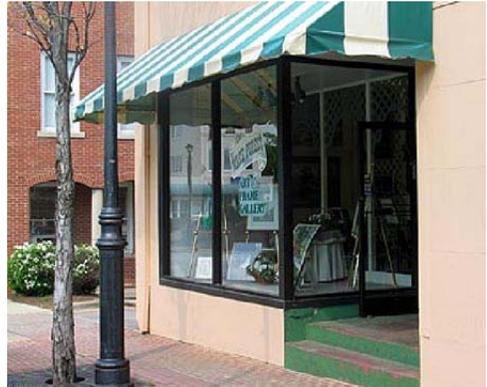
8.2 Ground Floor Treatment

The first floor of all buildings should be designed to encourage and complement pedestrian-style interest and activity by incorporating the following elements:

1. The ground level of the building must offer pedestrian interest along sidewalks and paths. Blank walls at the street level are not permitted. This includes windows, entrances, and architectural details. Incidental signage on buildings, awnings, and ornamentation is encouraged.
2. Windows, entryways, awnings, and arcades shall total at least sixty percent (60%) of the facade length abutting a public street. Windows and glass doors shall be clear, transparent glass. The use of reflective (mirrored) glass is not permitted. No window or door shall be horizontally separated by more than fifteen (15) feet from the nearest other window or door in the same facade visible from any public street. The lower edge of storefront windows shall be no more than 30 inches above the sidewalk. (Also see Section 8.6.4.)
3. Differentiate the entrance to commercial use of the ground floor from the secondary entrance, if any, to the upper levels.
4. Ventilation grates or emergency exit doors located at the first floor level in the building facade, which are oriented to any public street, shall be decorative.



Visually reduce large expanses of wall with windows and/or doors. (Ref. 8.2.1)



The ground floor should be interesting and inviting to the pedestrian with clear windows and easily accessible doorways..

8.3 Building Entrances

A primary entrance facade shall be oriented toward the street, be designed for the pedestrian, and be distinguishable from the rest of the building. Such entrances shall be designed to convey their prominence on the fronting facade. Use building massing, special architectural features, and changes in the roof line to emphasize building entrances. Additional entrances may be oriented toward side or rear parking lots. Service entrances for shipping and receiving shall be oriented away from the public street.



Raise residential building entries above street level to create privacy.

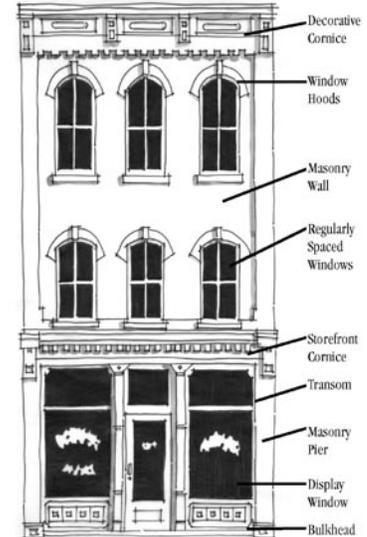
8.4 Residential Building Entrances



Residential building entrances shall be designed so as to be separate from the public sidewalk by elevation change, recessing, decorative fencing, or other technique to reinforce a privacy zone, privacy for the interior, and distinguish them from the commercial entrances.

8.5 Wall Detailing

1. Architectural elements like windows and doors, bulkheads, masonry piers, transoms, cornice lines, window hoods, awnings, canopies, and other similar details shall be used on all facades facing public rights-of-way.
2. Building wall offsets, including projections, recesses, and changes in floor level shall be used in order to: add architectural interest and variety; relieve the visual effect of a single, long wall; and subdivide the wall into human size proportions. Similarly, roofline offsets should be provided to lend architectural interest and variety to the massing of a building and to relieve the effect of a single, long roof.
3. Consider the use of cornices to provide a separation between the storefront and the upper stories.



8.6 Doors and Windows (Fenestration)

1. New storefronts shall incorporate display windows, or equivalent glazing, to match the rhythm of a storefront with display windows.
2. The rhythm and placement of windows in a new facade shall relate to the surrounding buildings.
3. The proportions of the windows shall be compatible with those on the surrounding buildings.
4. The wall to window ratio of new buildings shall be compatible with and relate to that of nearby structures. The wall to window ratio is the balance of openings in a building with the rest of the facade. (Also see Section 8.2.2.)
5. Maintain the pattern on adjacent buildings established by details such as recessed windows, wide sills, window boxes, and bay windows. Avoid windows that are flush to the wall.



Maintain the rhythm and placement of windows in a manner consistent with the area. (Ref. 8.6.6)



6. Windows, doors, columns, eaves, parapets, and other building components shall be proportional to the overall scale of the building. Windows shall be vertically proportioned wherever possible. Also, to the extent possible, upper story windows shall be vertically aligned with the location of windows and doors on the ground level.
7. Consider the use of transoms to provide light to the interior.

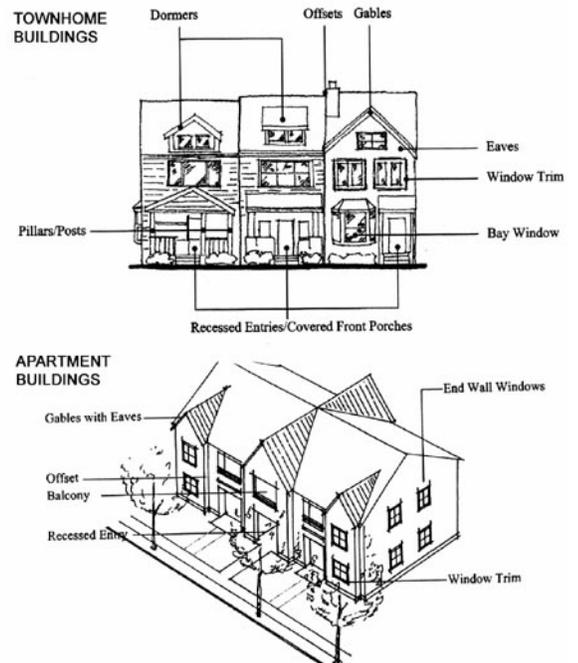
8.7 Awnings and Canopies

Awnings and canopies shall be designed in context with the historic surroundings. When used, awnings and canopies shall be placed at the top of window or doorway openings and shall relate to the shape of the top of the window. Awnings shall be made of canvas, treated canvas, or similar material. High quality metal awnings with an appropriate design compatible with the area, as determined by the Planning Director or his designee, may be allowed. Other metal, as well as vinyl (or plastic) awnings, are prohibited. Flat, metal awnings or other awnings that are inappropriately related to the character and period of the building shall not be permitted. No awning shall extend more than the width of the sidewalk or nine (9) feet, whichever is less. Awnings must be self-supporting from the wall. No supports shall rest on or interfere with the use of pedestrian walkways or streets. In no case shall any awning extend beyond the street curb or interfere with street trees or public utilities. (Also see Sections 8.11.4 and 9.0.)

Canopies shall be of solid materials and complement the color of the building to which they are affixed or associated. In some cases canopies may have supports separate from the building, such as at gas stations, but such canopies must be setback from the property and right-of-way lines a minimum of the required setback of accessory buildings, as required in the zoning district where located, and must not interfere with street trees or public utilities. (Also see Sections 8.11.4 and 9.0.)

8.8 Residential Façade Design

1. Garage doors are not permitted on the front elevation of any residential building.
2. All building elevations visible from the street shall provide doors, porches, balconies, and/or windows. This standard applies to each full and partial building story.
3. All residential buildings shall provide detailed design along all elevations. Detailed design shall be provided by using multiple architectural features on all elevations, as appropriate, for the proposed building type and style (may vary features on rear/side/front elevations):





- Dormers
- Gables
- Recessed entries
- Covered porch entries
- Cupolas or towers
- Pillars or posts
- Eaves (minimum 6 inch projection)
- Off-sets in building face or roof (minimum 16 inches)
- Window trim (minimum 4 inches wide)
- Bay windows
- Balconies
- Decorative patterns on exterior finish (e.g. scales/shingles, wainscoting, ornamentation, and similar features)
- Decorative cornices and roof lines (for flat roofs)
- Corner boards

8.9 Roofs

1. Roofline offsets shall be provided to lend architectural interest and variety to the massing of a building and to relieve the effect of a single, long roof.



Roof lines should be varied to break up wider building facades.

2. Roof pitches less than 3/12 and flat roofs will require a parapet wall and decorative cornice as appropriate. (Also see Section 8.8.3.)

3. Main roofs on residential buildings shall be symmetrical gables or hips with a pitch between 6:12 and 12:12. Monopitch (shed) roofs are allowed only if they are attached to the wall of the main building. No monopitch roof shall be less than 6:12.

4. Roof lines, type (such as flat, hip, mansard, or gable), and materials shall be architecturally compatible with facade elements and the rest of the building and with other buildings on the same and adjoining blocks. Roof forms shall be architecturally compatible with existing, adjacent, or surrounding structures.

5. A pitched roof shall be profiled by eaves and overhangs a minimum of 12 inches from the building face or with a gutter.

8.10 Materials and Colors

1. **Wall Materials:** Predominant exterior building materials shall be high quality materials, including brick, stucco, wood clapboard, fiber cement board, stone, cultured stone, and/or other materials similar in appearance and durability. Under no circumstances shall unfinished concrete block be permitted. Brick, stone, cultured stone, or decorative masonry units shall not be painted unless approved. EIFS shall not be permitted as a predominant exterior building material.



2. **Material Configuration:** Two wall materials may be combined horizontally on one facade. The heavier material should be below.
3. **Accent Materials:** In addition to acceptable predominant wall materials, tinted/textured decorative concrete masonry units, shingles, EIFS, and other minority elements may be used on facades as an accent material only.
4. **Roof Materials:** Pitched roofs should be clad in wood shingles, standing seam metal, terne, slate, dimensional asphalt shingles or similar material.
5. **Foundation Materials:** Foundation walls (except those under porches) shall be finished with brick, stone, or cultured stone. The crawlspace of porches shall be enclosed with brick, stone, cultured stone, or wood lattice, or any combination thereof.
6. **Colors:** Colors used for exterior surfaces shall be harmonious with surrounding development and shall visually reflect the traditional palette of downtown. Color shades shall be used to facilitate blending into the neighborhood.
 - A. **Facade and Trim Color:** Facade colors shall be of low reflectance earth tone, muted, subtle, or neutral colors. Building trim may feature brighter colors. The use of high-intensity or metallic colors is not allowed except for accent purposes. The use of fluorescent, day glow, or neon colors shall be prohibited as a predominant wall color. Variations in color schemes are encouraged in order to articulate entryways and public amenities so as to give greater recognition to these features.
 - B. **Submittals:** Color samples shall be provided to the staff, according to town standards, at the time of site plan review and prior to any renovations, remodelings, facelifts, and repainting, along with a description of how and where each color will be used. Colored renderings are encouraged, but shall not be a substitute for this requirement.

8.11 Historic Renovations

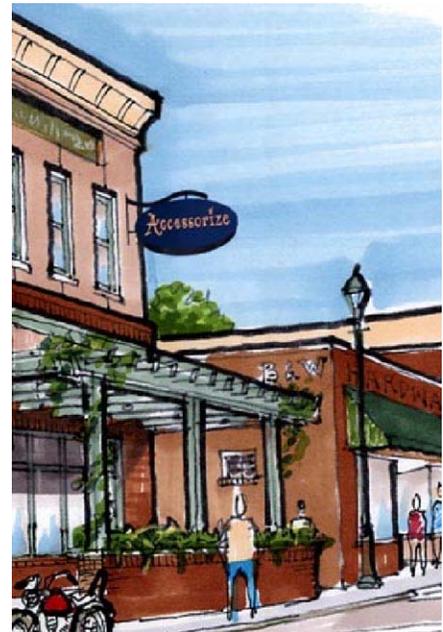
The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation shall be a guideline in renovating historic buildings. The following guidelines are intended to ensure compliance with these Standards.

1. Storefronts

- A. Original storefronts shall be maintained, repaired, and preserved with as little alteration as possible. Extensively deteriorated or missing elements shall be replaced with parts based on surviving details or other evidence.
- B. When completely missing, a new facade will be designed which is compatible with the size, scale, materials, and color of similar structures, old records or photographs, intact portions of the building, or other design appropriate to the period.
- C. Decorative detail shall be retained and restored whenever possible.



2. **Doors:** The original doors of a building shall be retained, repaired, and refinished, as needed, if possible. Replacement doors shall be compatible with the historic character and design of the building.
3. **Exterior Wall Cladding:** During renovations in existing buildings brick, stone, or wood facades shall not be covered or replaced with artificial siding or panels, including decorative concrete masonry units. Fiber cement siding, such as the brand name “Hardiplank”, may be used to replace wood clapboard siding.
4. **Awnings**
 - A. Flat, metal awnings or other awnings that are inappropriately related to the character and period of the building shall not be permitted. (See Section 8.7.)
 - B. The use of signage on upper facade awnings shall not be permitted.
5. **Windows**
 - A. Retain the original fenestration pattern (window opening proportions).
 - B. When possible, save and restore the original windows and frames. Replace missing or rotting parts with similar material. If the original window openings have already been altered, restore them to their original configuration and style, if known, or to something appropriate to the period.
 - C. If the ceiling has been lowered pull the dropped ceiling back from the original window to allow light to enter.
 - D. Do not block or fill window openings.
 - E. Do not use shutters on the first floor except where clear evidence indicates their presence historically. If shutters are to be used, they shall be functional unless the windows are fixed.
 - F. The use of reflective glazing is prohibited and the use of tinted glazing on major facades is prohibited.
6. **Signage** (Also see Section 9.0 and the sign section of the Zoning Ordinance.)
 - A. Signage shall be placed on the sign board or on the space above the storefront lintels.
 - B. Lettering style, materials, and colors shall complement the building.



Projecting signs shall be installed no higher than the top of the second story windows and shall not project further than 5 feet. (Ref. 9.0)



- C. Nationally distributed signs not compatible with the style and character of the building and with the sign board space shall not be allowed.

7. Exterior Treatment

- A. Previously unpainted brick, stone, cultured stone, or decorative concrete masonry units shall not be painted. If they are already painted repaint with an appropriate color after submission of color samples to and approval from the planning department. However, the removal of non-historic paint from brick and stone is strongly encouraged.
- B. The use of sandblasting and other abrasive treatments is not permitted.
- C. Masonry repair shall use an approved mortar mix that matches the compressive strength, color, and texture of the original. The mortar width and tooling profile will also match the original.
- D. Do not use waterproof coatings that do not breathe. The use of new types of waterproof coatings shall be discouraged, as their long-term effects are not known. The use of a waterproof coating shall not be used to circumvent needed maintenance, such as repointing.



9.0 SIGNAGE

Community wayfinding and other signs erected by a public entity are not covered in the following standards.

Sign Type	Standards
Ground Signs	<p>Maximum height of sign is 5 ft. Maximum 15 sq. ft. of sign surface area. Sign may be placed no closer than 10' from street pavement. Monument type, no signs with a single supporting pole.</p>
Wall Signs	<p>Maximum 12" protrusion. Maximum surface area is 1.5 sq. ft. per lineal ft. of each building wall facing a public street or facing a private access way if a building is not adjacent to a public street. Maximum 4 signs per each building wall. The sum of the areas of all signs must be less than 1.5 sq. ft. per lineal ft. of building wall to which they are attached to. No sign shall extend above roof line.</p>
I. D. Plaques	<p>Maximum 4 sq. ft. surface area.</p>
Home Occupation	<p>Maximum 2 sq. ft. surface area. Attached flat to building.</p>
Construction Project	<p>Maximum 32 sq. ft. surface area.</p>
Projecting Signs	<p>Projecting signs attached to a building in a perpendicular fashion shall be acceptable as part of the overall allowed wall signage. The number of such signs shall not exceed one per tenant. Projecting signs are subject to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The sign area for an one-story building shall not exceed 4 sq.ft. per side and for buildings exceeding one-story, the signboard shall not exceed 6 sq.ft. per side. (2) The height of the top edge of the signboard or bracket shall not exceed the height of the wall from which the sign projects. (3) No element of the sign shall hang lower than 7 feet above the ground or pedestrian walkway; (4) Projecting signs may extend over the public right-of-way, but shall not be located closer than 4 feet from street pavement. They shall be mounted and attached to buildings in a secure manner. The sign, brackets and mounting devices shall be maintained in good repair for both safety and appearance. (5) The signboard and the bracket shall not project more than 3 feet from the wall. (6) Projecting signs may be internally illuminated. Any indirect lighting or spot lighting shall require complete shielding of all light sources so as to illuminate only the face of the sign and prevent glare from off-site. (7) All lettering and graphics shall be permanent; changeable copy is prohibited. (8) Three dimensional signs are encouraged.
Marquee Signs	<p>Maximum 32 sq. ft. surface area. Freestanding signs maximum 6 feet in height May only be used in conjunction with a theater. Project over a public sidewalk no closer than 4 feet to the curb, so as not to interfere with street trees, street lights, or public signs.</p>
Traffic Control & Parking Lot	<p>Maximum 6 feet high. Maximum 4 sq. ft. surface area</p>



Sign Type	Standards
Time, Temperature	Not permitted in RA-HC. Maximum 20 feet high. Maximum 12 sq. ft. surface area.
Electronic Messaging	Not permitted.
Awning, Canopy, & other Suspended Signs	Within the allowable wall sign area, suspended signs shall be allowed under canopies or along pedestrian arcades, provided that: (1) Such signs shall not exceed one per tenant in a multi-tenant building entrance; (2) Such signs shall not exceed two square feet in area; (3) No element of the sign shall hang lower than seven feet above the ground or pedestrian walkway; (4) They shall be mounted and attached to buildings in a secure manner, shall not include wire or turnbuckle guy and shall be maintained in good repair for safety and appearance. (3) Such signs shall not be separately illuminated; and (4) Such signs shall contain only the address, suite number, logo or name of the occupant or business served by the entrance.
Sandwich Board Signs	(1) Maximum height: 4 ½ ft., including legs. (2) Sign dimensions shall be 2 ft. wide and 4 ft. high with a maximum surface area of 8 sq.ft. per side. (3) Must be constructed of materials that present a finished appearance. Rough-cut plywood is not acceptable. Decorative trim or molding shall surround the message area. The sign lettering shall be professionally painted or applied; a "yard sales" or "graffiti" look with hand painted or paint stenciled letters is not acceptable, however, chalkboard signs shall be permitted. The written message of the sign should be kept to the minimum necessary to communicate the name of the business or a special message of the business; (3) Signs may be mounted on lockable wheels. (4) Sandwich boards shall not be illuminated. (5) Only chalkboard signs shall provide for changeable copy. (6) Signs may be located on a public sidewalk, but must be located such that a minimum of 48 inches unobstructed space is maintained for pedestrians. The sign shall be placed to create the least impediment to pedestrian flow, e.g. between tree grates at curbside. (7) Must be removed at the close of business each day.
Wayfinding (erected by the public on either public or private property)	Public Purpose off-premises identification signs, no larger than 1 sq ft. per location, business or facility, may be permitted on public or private property if erected by the Town or its designee.

See Article VI, Section 4 of the Wake Forest Zoning Ordinance for definition and general standards regarding Signs.



10.0 DEFINITIONS

Frontage

The lot boundary which coincides with a public thoroughfare or space. Also, the facade of a structure facing the street.

Frontage Line

The portion of lot frontage which has a building or wall running parallel to it.

Gross Leasable Area

The floor area that can be leased by tenants, generally measured from the outside face of exterior walls to the center of walls separating tenants.

Leasable Area

Unless otherwise specified this term means “gross leasable area”.

Live-Work Unit

Small commercial enterprises with the ground floor occupied by commercial uses and a residential unit above. Commercial space may be a home-based business or may be leased independently.

Pedestrian-Oriented Street

A street that is intended to serve as a primary pathway for pedestrians in both use and design. Such streets are typified

by continuous uses along their primary frontages that maintain a pedestrian entrance. These are differentiated from auto-oriented streets where the posted speeds of the fronting thoroughfares, or the parking and/or loading requirements of the buildings (such as in the alleys) discourage pedestrian activity.

Story

That part of a building or structure above ground level between a floor and the floor or roof next above. A mezzanine shall be considered a story if it exceeds one-third of the area of the floor immediately below. A penthouse shall be considered a story if it exceeds one-third of the area of the roof. The under roof area with dormers does not count as a story.

11.0 MAINTENANCE

In order to meet the goals of this Code as stated in Section 1.0, Purpose and Intent, especially with respect to Safety and Attractiveness, which in turn promotes the overall economic health of the Renaissance Area, property owners in the Urban Districts shall be required to maintain the exterior premises of their property in good condition.

This applies to all exterior features, including but not necessarily limited to the following items: landscaping; building elements & materials; finishes, including paint; and accessories, such as awnings and signs.



Credits

This Urban Code was prepared for the Town of Wake Forest by
The Lawrence Group, Town Planners and Architects

Renaissance Plan Advisory Committee

Thomas Walters, Chairperson
Jeff Adolphsen
Jonnie Anderson
Mike Berry
Amy Dowdle
Frank Drake
Matt Hale
Tom Iversen
Vivian Jones
Kara Loftin
John McGarrigle
Bob Polanco
Johnny Whitfield

Town of Wake Forest Planning Department

Chip Russell, Planning Director
Agnes Wanman, Planner
Ann Ayers, Planner

The Lawrence Group
Town Planners and Architects
PO Box 1836
Davidson, NC 28036
704.896.1696 p
704.896.1697 f
craig.lewis@thelawrencegroup.com

All photos and graphics by
The Lawrence Group unless otherwise noted.

Reproduction with Credit in Print.