

New Construction

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE H-1 DISTRICT

New construction in the historic district is important in encouraging growth and new investment. New construction may include additions to an existing building or the design of a new building, either on an infill site between existing buildings or on an open site. To maintain the integrity of the district, new construction must be compatible and in context with other buildings.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS...

Observing the same design principles and organization will help unify new and existing construction.

New construction that expresses the time in which it is built is important to the ongoing history of downtown Roanoke.

High-rise and signature buildings can provide new focal points for the downtown while relating to the lower scale of adjacent buildings.

GUIDELINES FOR COMPATIBLE DESIGN

- **Recommended** actions or treatments are indicated by ✓.
- Actions or treatments **not recommended** and other warnings are indicated by X.

Additions to Existing Buildings

✓ Additions should be compatible with existing buildings in size, scale, color, and materials.

X Do not let an addition overwhelm an existing building. Additions should be subordinate to the existing building in size and appearance, be located on the least-public side of the building, and exhibit a distinct but compatible appearance if it has its own street frontage.

X Do not obscure or destroy important features or materials of existing buildings when making additions.

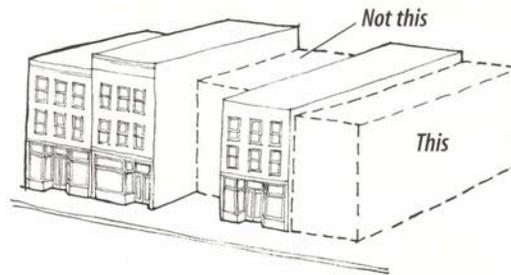
✓ Design and construct additions so that if they are removed in the future, the basic form and character of the original building will remain intact.



This bank addition is compatible in appearance with the original building, yet is clearly subordinate to it in size and detailing.

Siting/Relationship to Street

- ✓ Orient construction to the street front that supports the greatest pedestrian activity
- ✓ Observe the same setback as adjacent or nearby buildings. Buildings should be sited at the front of a lot abutting the back edge of the sidewalk.



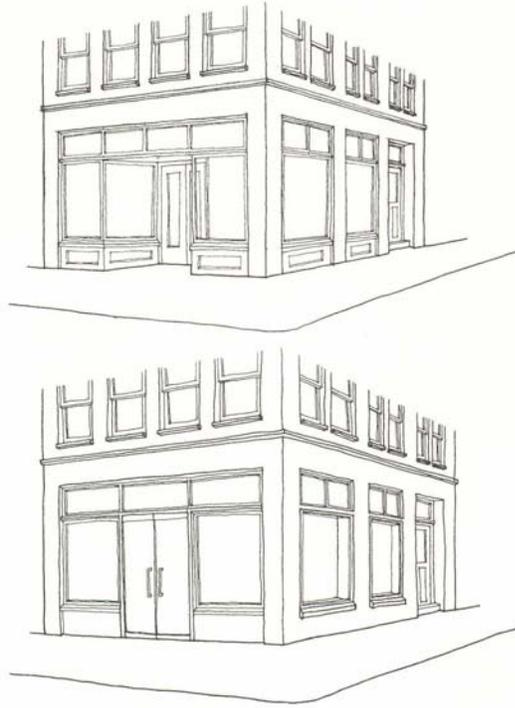
Infill construction should not have a greater setback than adjacent buildings.

✓ Incorporate ground-floor commercial used in new construction, whenever possible, to add vitality to the streetscape. If the ground floor is to be used for offices or similar used, design the ground floor façades to:

- permit views into the building and
- incorporate architectural detailing to provide visual interest.

DEFINITION

Street frontage: The length of a building site along a street.



New construction should include commercial spaces at the ground floor, such as in the upper illustration, or should make provision for views into ground floor offices, as shown in the lower illustration, to add vitality to the streetscape.

✓ Place parking to the rear or side of the building or use another existing parking area.

Height, Width and Proportion

✓ New buildings should conform in general with the predominant story height of existing buildings on a block.

✓ New buildings should maintain the predominant width and proportion of existing buildings on a block. Most commercial buildings in the historic district are vertical in proportion and fairly uniform in width. Buildings on infill sites that are wider than most should be subdivided into bays that relate to the width of typical buildings.



Infill construction should comply with the predominant story height, as shown in the upper illustration, and building width and proportion, as shown in the lower illustration, of existing buildings on a block. Where wider infill sites occur, new construction should be subdivided into bays of appropriate width.

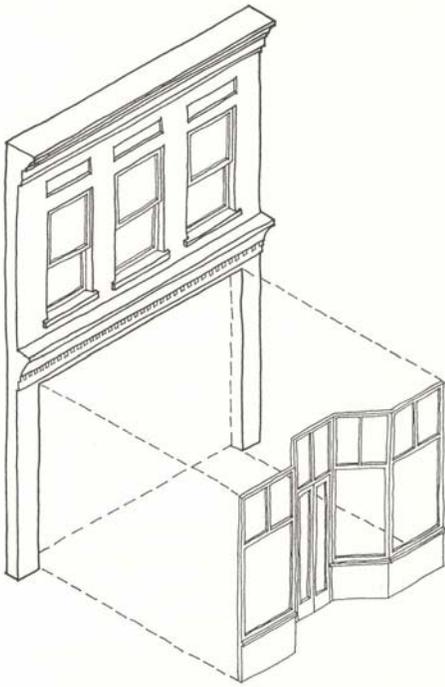
Roofs

✓ Choose a roof form that is compatible with other commercial buildings in the historic district. Roofs for new commercial buildings should not be prominent visual features of the main façade. Most buildings have shallow-pitched shed roofs that slope toward the rear of the building and are hidden behind a parapet wall, although several buildings have gabled roofs behind a high or stepped parapet.

Storefront

✓ Design a compatible new storefront by incorporating the design features of traditional storefronts. Employ present-day construction materials and techniques to avoid recreating a historic appearance.

✓ Provide a separate upper-floor entrance, if appropriate, but keep the primary emphasis on the storefront and its entry.



A new storefront should use large areas of glass for transparency, incorporate a recessed entry, and be contained by the piers and storefront lintel of the front façade.

Windows

✓ Incorporate windows of the same size, proportion, spacing, and rhythm in new construction as those of existing commercial buildings.

✓ Keep the proportion of window to wall area for both upper and lower facades compatible to that of existing buildings. The upper facades of most commercial buildings in the historic district have a significantly larger area devoted to solid wall surface than to windows, while lower facades and storefronts are primarily windows.



Infill construction should keep the same pattern of windows and storefront openings as existing adjacent buildings.

Style

✓ Adopt a style for new construction that is compatible with the traditional character of older commercial buildings in the historic district yet reflects its own time.

✗ Do not use inappropriate historic themes that give the building a false historical appearance.



New construction should be compatible in appearance with its older neighbors yet reflect the time in which it was built.

Materials, Colors and Details

✓ Choose materials that are appropriate to the district's commercial character. Avoid materials and colors usually associated with residences.

✓ Choose materials that have color as one of their inherent features, such as brick or stone, for a building's exterior wall material (s). The colors of materials for new construction should be compatible with those of existing adjacent buildings.

✓ Select colors for the painted features of a building that are compatible with its exterior wall materials and with the color schemes of neighboring buildings.

✓ Incorporate detail and decoration to an appropriate degree in new construction to avoid blandness and establish a compatible relationship with existing buildings. Avoid, however, using exact copies of decorative features or details that are unique to a particular commercial building.

High-rise and Signature Buildings

High-rise buildings (those over five stories tall) and signature buildings (those designed by a nationally recognized architect or having exceptional design merit) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In general, however, the following guidelines should be

considered:

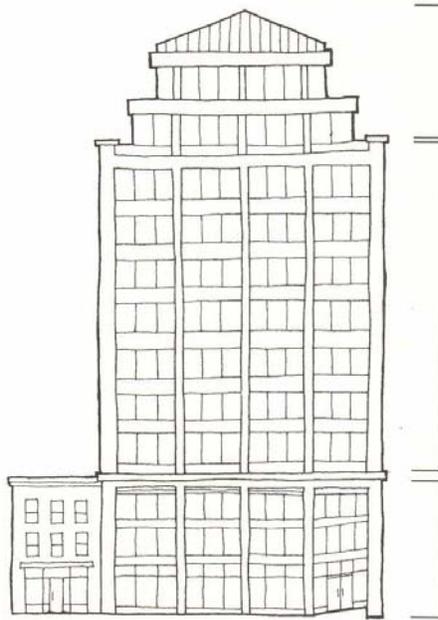
✓ Reinforce pedestrian and streetscape activity at ground floor level by providing:

- ground-floor commercial spaces,
- views and access to ground-floor offices and other similar spaces, and
- pedestrian amenities such as benches and landscape areas.

✓ Ensure that the new building fits within the context of the area. Consider street views, activities, buildings in the vicinity, and other features.

✓ Adopt a three-part organization for the design of a high-rise building, consisting of:

- base – the lower floor(s) that supports streetscape activity or, if the building is significantly taller than its neighbors, that relate to the height of adjacent buildings,
- tower – the typical upper floors that have architectural treatment on all sides, and
- cap – the top floor(s) and roof that give the building its identity on the skyline.



High-rise buildings should have a three-part organization.

X Avoid blocking views:

- to significant, city-wide focal points and
- down major streets or pedestrian thoroughfares.