

COMMERCIAL & MIXED-USE INFILL GUIDELINES

Location of Commercial & Mixed-Use Buildings

As noted previously in the guidelines for new residential buildings, *these guidelines do not dictate permitted land uses*, as that issue is determined by the underlying zoning. However, it is within the HDC’s authority to approve commercial and mixed-use building types, regardless of the uses that actually occur within them. Within the context of these guidelines, the term “mixed-use buildings” refers to structures with ground floor commercial uses and upper floor office or residential uses.

It is the intent of these guidelines that the HDC will determine the appropriate location of commercial and mixed-use building on a case-by-case basis. There are very few locations within the district with a significant grouping of historic commercial or mixed-use buildings. *Street segments most appropriate for new commercial and mixed-use buildings include Capitol Avenue, 9th Street, and portions of Daisy L. Gatson Bates Drive.*

Compatibility by Context

The City’s historic preservation ordinance that serves as the basis for the MacArthur Park Historic District lists eleven Design Factors to be considered in reviewing proposed infill development. Those Design Factors have been consolidated for these design guidelines utilizing the following nine Design Factors :

- 1) Building Orientation
- 2) Building Setbacks
- 3) Building Scale & Massing
- 4) Roofs
- 5) Facades
- 6) Foundations
- 7) Architectural Detailing
- 8) Materials
- 9) Site Design

The term “historic precedent,” as used within these guidelines, refers to design and material traditions that are commonly found in the district and that comprise part of the area’s historic architectural vocabulary. ~~*Buildings emulating or duplicating eras and styles with no historically based relationship to the district should be discouraged.*~~

In principle, locations with a strong cohesiveness of design character and historic architectural integrity should be protected by insuring that new commercial and mixed-use buildings have a high degree of compatibility. A key guide to determine architectural integrity is the map illustrating National Register, contributing and non-contributing buildings.

Design Guidelines

With the location and contextual considerations described above in mind, each application for new development should be evaluated based upon the following nine Design Factors. *These guidelines should be applied much more rigorously to portions of a building visible from a street than from other areas.*

1) Building Orientation

Relationship of Primary Axis to the Street

The orientation of a new building is considered with respect to the relationship of its primary (longest) axis with the associated street that it fronts. On a street segment (block face) dominated by historic buildings oriented perpendicular with the street, the new building should be perpendicular with the street. On a street dominated by historic buildings oriented horizontal with the street, the



This small node of older commercial buildings on E. 9th Street is perhaps the only intact grouping of such buildings in the district. Concerns with insuring that new non-residential buildings in this area are compatible should be stronger here than elsewhere within the district.



The front façade of this new building lacks a front entrance to address the street. Such a design may be inappropriate in the MacArthur Park Historic District.



Regardless of the alterations that have occurred to these buildings on E. 9th Street, a new commercial or mixed-use building near them having more than three (3) stories may be out of scale with this node's historic context.



This new building uses pilasters to break up the massing of its façade, although the glass may be a bit too tinted to be compatible.

new building should be horizontal with the street. Although most historic residential buildings in the district are perpendicularly oriented, *there is no distinct pattern for the small number of historic commercial and mixed-use building within the district.*

Primary Façade & Entrance

The building's primary façade and entrance should front directly onto the building's primary associated street. Relative to other entrances of a building, including rear entrances that might serve a rear parking area, the primary entrance should be visually dominant in its design.

2) Building Setbacks

- *Front Setbacks:* Should be within 0 to 5 feet of the adjacent street right-of-way (ROW). Greater setbacks may be allowed for outdoor dining if a low wall (perhaps integrated with fencing) is used to define the street wall along the ROW. Such wall and/or fence should be between 2 and 3 feet in height.
- *Side Setbacks:* No requirements beyond the applicable zoning.
- *Rear Setbacks:* No requirements beyond the applicable zoning.

Parking areas should not occur between the building and its associated street.

3) Building Scale & Massing

Overall Heights: Permitted building heights should be determined with their geographic context in mind. In some areas of the district, taller buildings may be appropriate than in other areas.

Corner towers, cupolas, and similar vertical architectural features not constituting habitable space should not count towards the height standards.

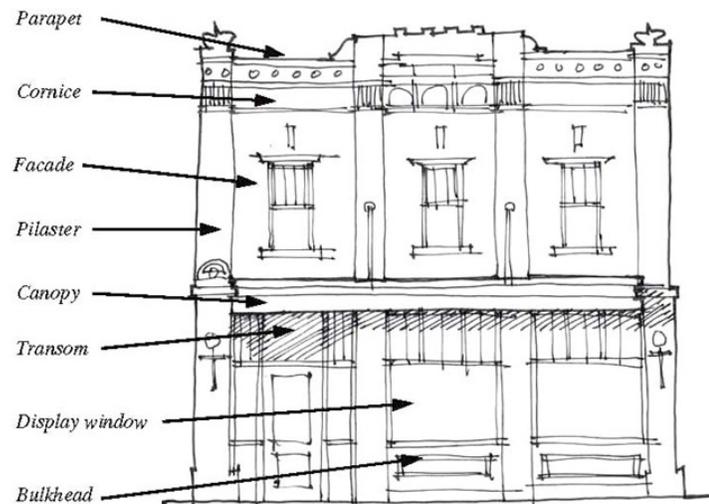
Widths: No building should exceed 150 feet in width (street frontage)

Massing: Massing should be generally consistent with the scale and rhythm of historic commercial and mixed-use buildings in the area. No front façade wall plane should be uninterrupted for more than 30 feet of its width. Breaks in a façade plane to create one or more vertical bays can be made with one or more of the following elements: wall off-sets (projections or recesses) at least 4 inches in depth, pilasters with a minimum depth of 4 inches, and porches/balconies. Material changes can also help to create massing, but is insufficient as the sole measure to create massing.

4) Roofs

Roof Forms: Most or all existing historic commercial and mixed-use buildings have flat or only slightly sloped roofs. Roofs of new commercial and mixed-use buildings should also have flat or only slightly sloped roofs. Such roofs should be obscured by a parapet wall. There may be exceptions in which the HDC finds a pitched roof acceptable.

Roof Components & Penetrations: Roof components and penetrations, such as vent pipes, solar panels and satellite dishes, should be located so as to minimize their visibility from the primary associated street.



5) Facades

Entrances: The primary entrance for all commercial and mixed-use buildings should exist on the primary façade, which should front onto the building’s associated street. Considerations to achieve prominence of the primary door include the door’s size and degree of ornamentation and design detail (canopies, pilasters, paved pedestrian areas, etc.). Corner buildings may feature a corner door that addresses both adjacent streets.

Transparency: The term “transparency” refers to the extent of glazing (glassed area) associated with a façade via windows and doors.

- Ground Floor – Minimum transparency of 60%
- Upper Floors – Minimum transparency of 35%

Glass: Window and door glass should not be reflective or heavily tinted.

Windows: The following standards should apply:

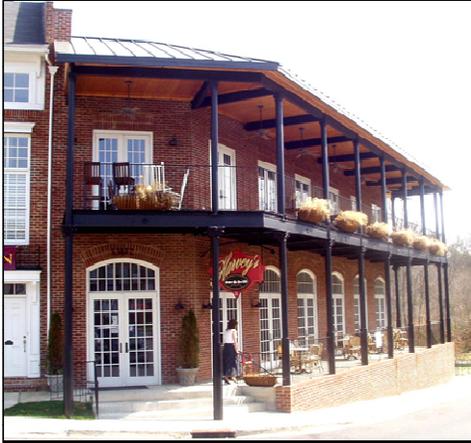
- Orientation: All ground floor windows should be vertically oriented or square. The only exception is a storefront window having a horizontal orientation if it is part of an otherwise vertically oriented storefront bay (see example in the illustration above). Upper floor windows should be vertically oriented .
- ~~Window Panes: Eras and styles with no historically based relationship to the district should be avoided.~~
- Shutters: They should only occur on upper floors and they should be sized to fit the window. Even if not operable, shutters should be designed and mounted to generally appear operable.

Awnings, Canopies & Balconies: Awnings, canopies and balconies are encouraged on front facades, but not required. Definitions and standards are provided for each below:

- Awnings: Awnings are located above the ground floor level, are cantilevered, and feature a framework with a covering.



This new infill commercial building has many of the characteristics consistent with these design guidelines, including: front setback on the street ROW, a flat roof screened with a parapet wall, the use of pilasters to break up the façade into vertical bays, paneled wood bulkheads, transoms, awnings, and a well-defined primary entrance off the associated street.



Rather than having a more traditional looking wooden balcony, this new mixed-use building has a simplistic and contemporary looking metal balcony that could work in a district such as MacArthur Park.

shallow balconies can be considered.

Bulkheads: Bulkheads should be provided in the portion of the storefront between the grade level and windows. Historic precedents are typically made of paneled wood, but other materials and designs might be considered.

6) Foundations

Unlike residential buildings in the district, commercial and mixed-use buildings should feature entries at grade and not elevated by a raised foundation.

7) Architectural Detailing

Architectural detailing entails the various relatively small elements that are often decorative in nature. Examples include pilasters, ornate cornices with brick corbelling, and panels bulkheads below the storefront. Below are key principles to apply to detailing:

- *Detailing should be consistent with the particular style and era a building is trying to reflect.*
- *Detailing is most appropriate for buildings seeking to replicate historic buildings.* For architectural contexts in which strong compatibility is less critical for new buildings, detailing is unnecessary and perhaps even undesirable.

8) Materials

The location and design of materials often determines the compatibility of materials. Because of the numerous variables in considering materials, a list of permitted and prohibited materials has been intentionally excluded here. However, key principles for considering materials are provided below:

The focus should be on a material's appearance rather than the actual material. Modern materials that produce the appearance, texture, and proportions of the historic materials may be acceptable.

Durability is an exception to the focus on the appearance of materials. If there are concerns that a material will not weather well and will eventually have an appearance that reveals that they are not historically-based materials, the actual material should indeed be considered.

The use and design of materials should consider historic precedents within the district The term "historic precedent," as used within these guidelines, refers to design and material traditions that are commonly found in the

Awnings are also permitted on upper floors when sized to fit individual windows.

- **Canopies:** Canopies are located above the ground floor level, they can be cantilevered or supported by columns (colonnaded), and they should be either wood or metal. Column locations must not impede pedestrian access. Canopies should be one of the following two types:
 - 1) Flat and perpendicular to the facade, or
 - 2) Low to moderately-pitched shed roof should not exceed a 25 degree slope (3:12 pitch). Such roofs should feature standing-seam metal.

- **Balconies:** Balconies should be metal, heavy timber, or an approved material simulating wood. They should have a minimum depth of 6 feet unless a shallower depth is required by building codes. Deeper balconies are encouraged. Balconies must be supported by columns located so as to not impede pedestrian access. If covered, the roofs should follow the standards for canopies. Permanent screens are prohibited, but roll-down screens and wood (or simulated wood) shutters are acceptable. Although discouraged, exceptions for cantilevered

district and that comprise part of the area's historic architectural vocabulary.

9) Site Design

See chapter on site design for details.



Clapboard siding would be an acceptable cladding for a new commercial building in the district. However, since brick is the more dominant cladding for this building type, brick should continue to be the primary material for most new commercial and mixed-use buildings in MacArthur Park.

Recent Built Commercial and Mixed Use Infill

