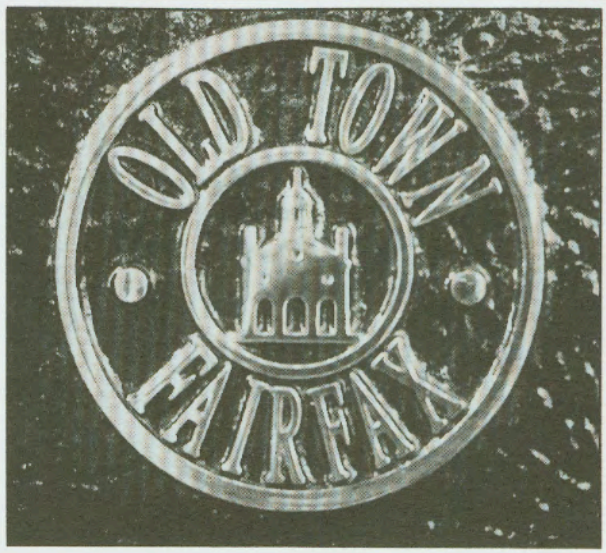
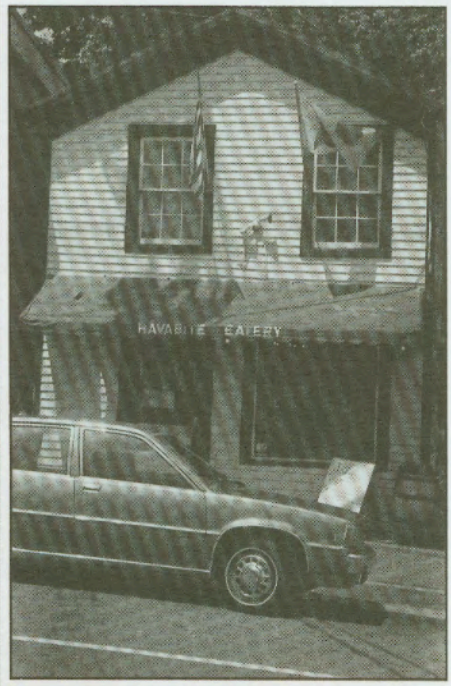
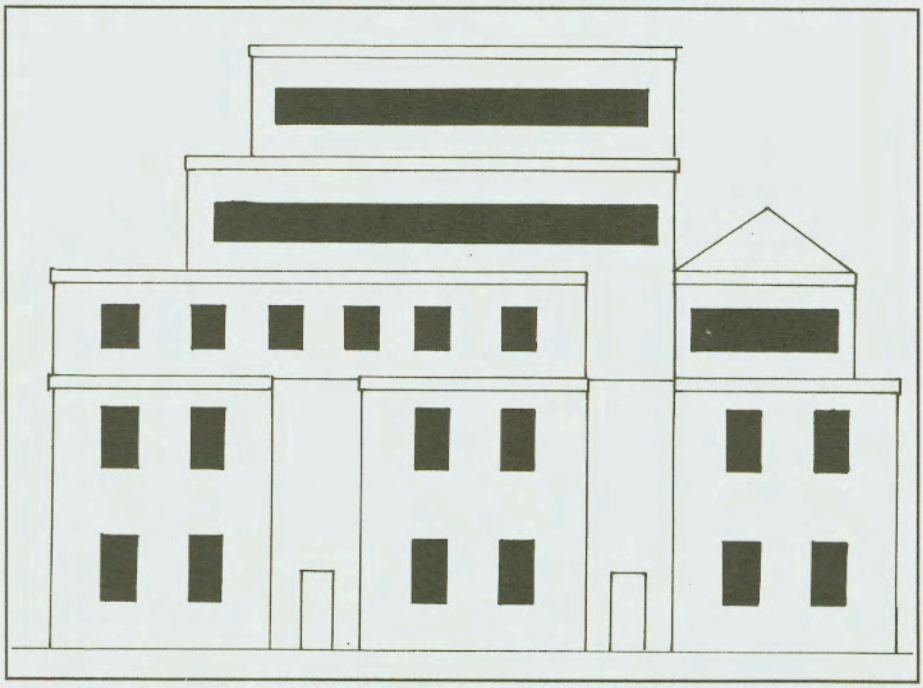


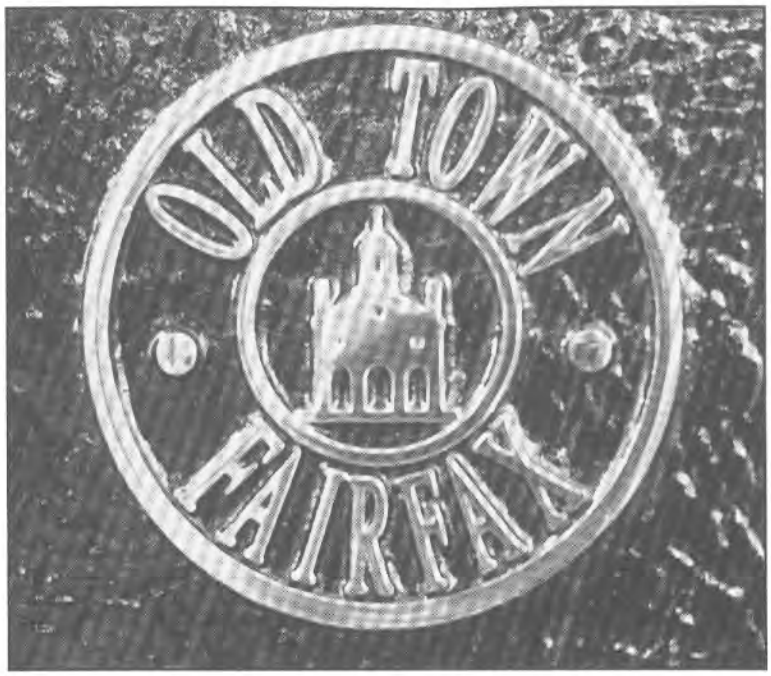




Design Guidelines

The Old Town Fairfax Historic and Transition Districts

THE CITY OF FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA



Design Guidelines

The Old Town Fairfax Historic and Transition Districts

THE CITY OF FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA

JUNE 1993

Credits

City of Fairfax, Virginia

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July 1, 1992 - June 30, 1994

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Purpose

With these design guidelines, the City hopes to maintain and build on the distinctive architectural character of the Old Town Fairfax Historic District and to create a more unified appearance between it and the surrounding Old Town Fairfax Transition District. These guidelines can assist property owners and City officials in designing and evaluating proposals for both the rehabilitation of existing structures and the construction of new buildings in the districts. The guidelines extend to landscape and site features as well as signs within both districts.

The intent of the guidelines is to *guide* design decisions within the districts, not dictate them. These are a set of principles, not a set of strictly followed laws. The Board of Architectural Review should follow the intent of the guidelines but interpret them generally and not substitute them for common sense and good judgement. These guidelines are not designed to be overly specific or to dictate certain designs to owners and designers. Their purpose also is not to encourage copying or mimicking particular historic styles but to provide a general design framework for new construction. Good designers can take these clues and have the freedom to design appropriate, new architecture within both districts. The zoning code provides more specific regulations and property owners should consult with the Zoning Office before undertaking any building projects within these districts.

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I

Design Review in the Old Town Fairfax Historic and Transition Overlay Districts

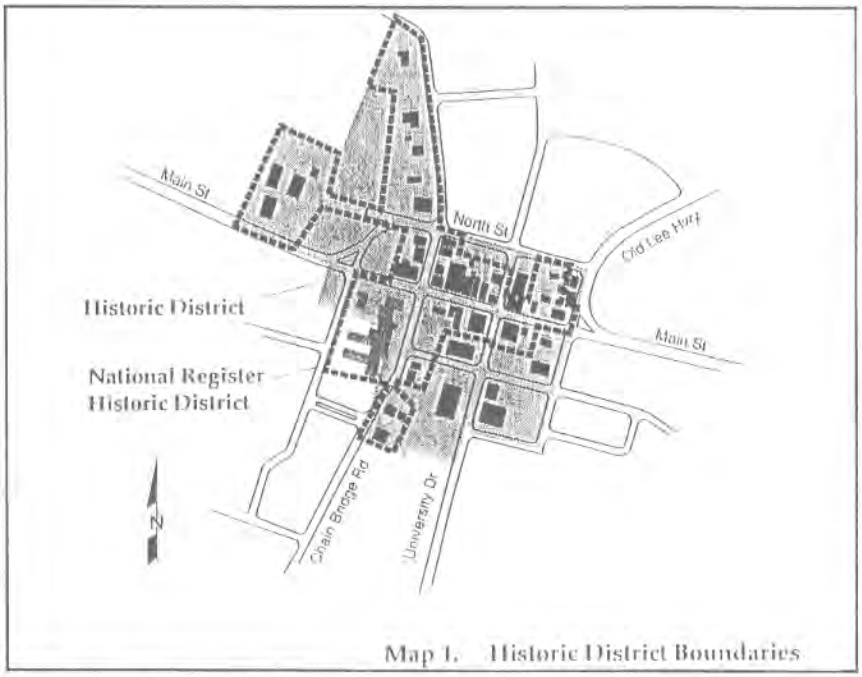
INTRODUCTION

The City of Fairfax can trace its roots back to 1799 when the county courthouse was relocated here from Alexandria and the community was known as Providence. The village grew up around the courthouse throughout the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. The result was an attractive mix of residences surrounding a small Main Street of commercial structures. After World War II the surrounding area began to grow rapidly with the expansion of the federal government in nearby Washington, D. C.

In 1964, a seven block area of the City's older core was designated the "Old and Historic District" to "promote the general welfare through the preservation and protection of historic places and areas of historic interest in the City".

The historic district boundaries generally followed those of the original town of Providence.

A one block buffer was subsequently added to protect the district's integrity by providing greater control over the adjacent area. In 1977, the historic Truro Church property was added to the district, and in 1986, the City Council enacted ordinances which further protected the Old and Historic District. In 1987 much of the district was incorporated within the boundaries of a state and federal designation which was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places (see Map 1). The name of the downtown district was changed from the Old and Historic District to Old Town Fairfax Historic District in 1990.



Boundaries of Historic Districts

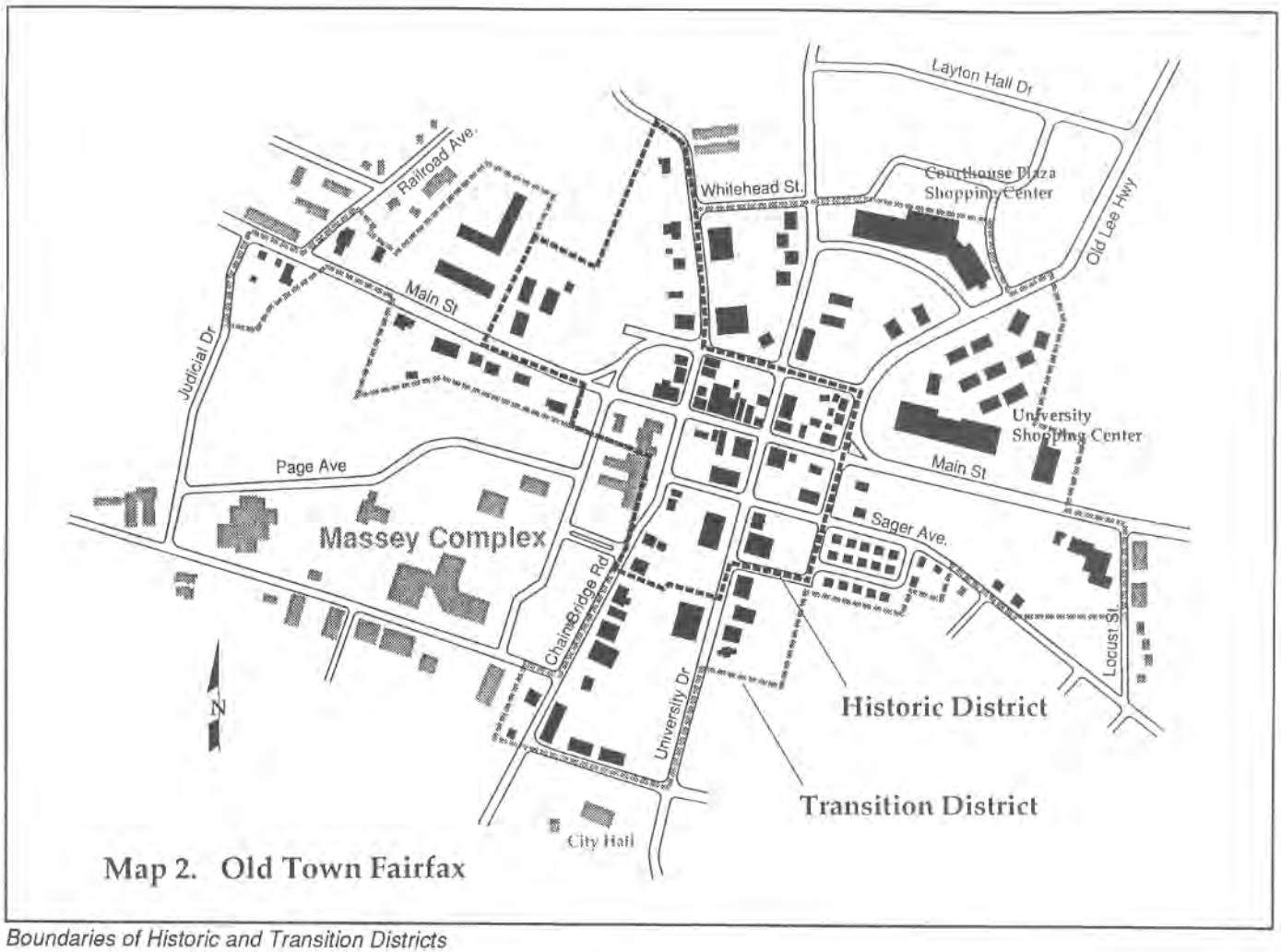
URBAN DESIGN GOALS FOR THE HISTORIC AND TRANSITION DISTRICTS

1. **Avoid** demolishing buildings that contribute to the historic character of the district.
2. **Build** on the existing character of the historic district.
3. **Maintain** and strengthen the street "wall" in the Main Street area and use the street wall as an urban design standard in the transition district.
4. **Respect** the boundary between the commercial areas and surrounding neighborhoods.
5. **Respect** the architectural character of the neighboring historic district when designing new large-scale developments located in the transition district.
6. **Undertake** changes that will improve the historic and transition areas for pedestrian use.
7. **Increase** the opportunities for open space to be used by pedestrians in the districts.
8. **Maintain** the Fairfax Courthouse area as the focal point of the district.
9. **Strengthen** the definition of the entrances and boundaries of the historic district.
10. **Continue** the emphasis on attractive and well maintained landscaping within the districts.
11. **Respect** the existing physical street patterns and lot orientation of the historic district.

THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

While the City of Fairfax's Board of Architectural Review (BAR) has the authority in general to review all construction proposals within the City limits (with the exception of single family detached dwellings), these guidelines relate only to the historic district and the surrounding transition district (see Map 2). The BAR reviews the design of any exterior rehabilitation or new construction project including signs and major landscaping features of the project. Changes in color of buildings within the districts must also be reviewed. They also review and must approve the moving or demolition of any building within the historic district.

A building owner must file an application with the Zoning Office in the Department of Community Development and Planning at least one month before the next meeting of the BAR, which meets twice a month. Minor construction



Boundaries of Historic and Transition Districts

projects and sign applications may be submitted fourteen days before the BAR meeting.

The application should be accompanied by sufficient drawings, sketches, photographs, specifications, descriptions, and material and color samples to permit adequate review of the request. Conceptual presentations for projects may be made without filing an application. The BAR must make a decision on all applications within sixty days. An applicant may appeal the BAR decision with justifiable cause to the City Council and further appeal may be made to the Circuit Court.

For a more complete explanation of the BAR authority and review process see the local zoning code. In addition to BAR review, all projects must also meet the provisions of the underlying zoning categories as well as building codes, neither of which are a part of these guidelines.

BUILDING CODES AND ZONING REGULATIONS

Any requirements of the Old Town Fairfax Historic or Transition Overlay Districts' Ordinances are in addition to zoning regulations for the underlying zoning category of an individual parcel or city-wide building codes. Check with the Zoning Office and Code Enforcement Office to make sure that your plans will be in compliance.

Whereas new construction must comply strictly with the letter of the code, the BOCA Basic National Building Code allows a certain amount

of flexibility for historic buildings located within the Old Town Fairfax Historic District. Contact the City of Fairfax's Zoning Office if you need more information about building codes.

PLANNING A REHABILITATION OR NEW CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Your building may need rehabilitation for a number of reasons. It may be in poor condition, or it may have been insensitively remodeled in the past. Or, you simply may want to make certain changes to add modern conveniences to your building.

Before rehabilitation even begins, maintenance is critical. If an older structure is properly maintained, it should not require extensive rehabilitation except for necessary modernization of mechanical systems and periodic replacement of items that wear out, such as roofs and paint. Good maintenance practices can extend the life of most features of a historic building.

Many of the guidelines emphasize the importance of and give specific advice on proper maintenance of building elements. Nevertheless, if a historic building has been insensitively remodeled over the years, it may require some rehabilitation to return it to a more historically appropriate appearance.

The design of a new building or addition in a historic district is often a difficult issue for property owners, architectural review boards, and architects. The guidelines in this publication reflect the philosophy that new structures should complement and respect the existing character of historic buildings without copying them. New buildings that are a reproduction of historic buildings may confuse the public as to what is really historically significant and what is not.

FEDERAL TAX CREDITS FOR REHABILITATION

If you are undertaking a major rehabilitation of a contributing historic building in the Fairfax National Register Historic District, which has nearly the same boundaries as the Old Town Fairfax Historic District (see Map 1), you may be eligible for certain federal tax credits. The building or part of the building must be income-producing; owner-occupied residences are not eligible for this program.

The tax credit is calculated as twenty percent of these rehabilitation expenses. A rehabilitation must be "substantial" to qualify the investor for any tax credits. The Internal Revenue Service defines "substantial" as exceeding the owner's adjusted basis in the building, or $5,000, whichever is greater. The adjusted basis is generally defined as the purchase price, minus the value of the land, minus any depreciation already claimed, plus the value of any earlier capital improvements. The rehabilitation expenses must occur during a consecutive twenty-four month period; or, for phased rehabilitations, during a consecutive sixty-month period.

Other requirements to be a "certified rehabilitation" are that the application must be filed with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources before any construction begins and your rehabilitation must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Contact the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for more information about this program and before spending time and money on architectural plans. (See state organizations in the bibliography)

REHABILITATION/NEW CONSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

1. Look at your building to determine its style, age, and the elements that help define its special character.
2. Review the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in this chapter. They are the basis of many of the recommendations of this guidebook. These standards must be followed if your building is income-producing and you are applying for federal tax credits. (See previous section: "Federal Tax Credits for Rehabilitation.")
3. Chances are your project will need various approvals including an occupancy permit, a BAR certificate of appropriateness, and a building permit. Become familiar with the BOCA Code as it applies to historic buildings and meet with the Zoning Office staff early on about your plans.
4. Meet with the Zoning Office staff early in the process for informal input and helpful technical information and also to fill out the application for the BAR. Consider presenting a conceptual design, particularly for an addition or a new building, to the BAR before seeking formal approval.
5. Seek advice from or use contractors experienced in working with historic buildings and materials. Some tasks, such as repointing or cleaning historic masonry, require special knowledge, techniques, and methods.
6. If your project is complicated, consider employing an architect experienced in working with historic buildings or with new construction in historic districts. In larger commercial, office, or institutional buildings you must work with a licensed architect or engineer in order to receive a building permit.
7. If you are designing a new building or addition, look at surrounding buildings to determine their style, age, and the elements that help define the area's special character and create a design that relates to the design character of the historic buildings in the area. Follow the design guidelines for new construction within the historic or transition districts as listed in this publication.
8. If adding on to an existing historic building make sure that the new work does not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. New additions and adjacent or related new construction should be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The guidelines in this publication are based on The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (see the bibliography for citation). First developed in 1979, these guidelines have been expanded and refined, most recently in early 1990. They are used by the National Park Service to determine if the rehabilitation of a historic building has been undertaken in a manner that is sensitive to its historic integrity. The guidelines are very broad by nature since they apply to the rehabilitation of any contributing building in any historic district in the United States. These guidelines must be followed if applying for federal rehabilitation tax credits.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are as follows:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

The City of Fairfax has been designated as a Certified Local Government (CLG) since 1990. Under this program local governments become partners with the state and federal governments in carrying out preservation programs in the community. Federal law requires that state historic preservation offices award at least ten percent of their annual federal appropriation to CLGs through grants to conduct a variety of local preservation projects. In order to apply for CLG status the City of Fairfax had to develop a comprehensive local preservation program to survey and designate its historic resources and to plan for their protection. In addition, the City must continue to insure that the members of the BAR possess professional training or experience in preservation related fields and that they receive yearly training in topics related to their work as a review board.

In return for meeting these requirements as a CLG, the City of Fairfax:

- assumes a role in the identification, evaluation, and protection of the community's historic resources;
- reviews National Register nominations for properties in its jurisdiction before these nominations are considered by VDHR;
- is eligible to apply for federal matching grants set aside for CLGs. Thus far the City has received two grants — the first to nominate two properties within the City to the National Register and the second to prepare this guidelines publication.

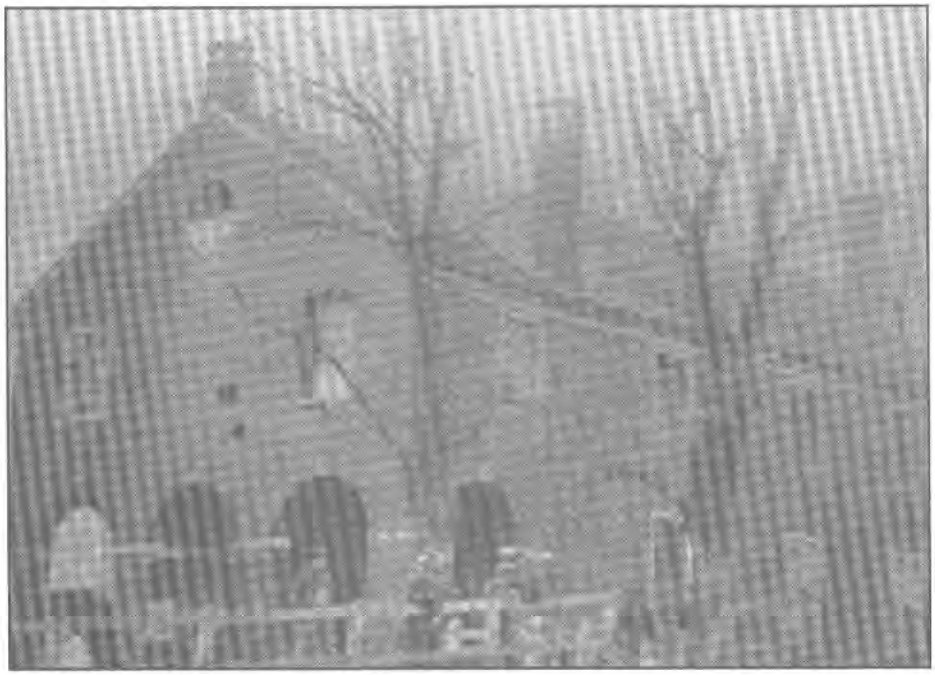
2. Patterns of Development in Old Town Fairfax

The Fairfax area was settled in the mid-1700s by farmers pushing out from the Tidewater region and by Marylanders crossing the Potomac into Virginia for economic and religious reasons. The City at that time was part of Truro Parish, which was created in 1732. Later, it became a part of Fairfax County, which was formed in 1742 along the same boundaries as Truro Parish. In 1799 the County Court was moved from Alexandria to a new court house near the center of the County at the junction of Ox Road (Route 123) and The Little River Turnpike (Route 236), where it still stands.

A small village began to form around the new court house. In 1805, the village was incorporated as the Town of Providence. As established by the General Assembly, the town was

laid out in one-half acre lots which were sold to the highest bidder who agreed to build "a dwelling house at least 16 feet square with a brick or stone 'chimney' on each lot." Throughout the early 1800s, the town remained small, but very prosperous as a local center of commerce and government.

Because the county court performed a broad range of administrative functions, it was extremely important in local affairs throughout the nineteenth century. By the 1830s the seat of the local government of Fairfax County had become a local trading center. The community was described in an 1835 news article as containing "besides the ordinary county buildings, 50 dwelling houses, for the most part frame buildings, 3 mercantile stores, 4 taverns, and 1 common school" (Joseph Martin, *Gazetteer of Virginia and the District of Columbia*, 1835).



Fairfax County Courthouse, c. 1865

During the 1840s, newcomers from northern states established farms to take advantage of growing urban markets nearby. An April 1844 issue of the *Alexandria Gazette* noted that "Several handsome and spacious buildings have recently been built, the lots improved, and other marks of enterprise and industry exhibited." In 1842 Providence expanded its limits and incorporated as a town.

Located near Washington, D. C., Fairfax was destined to play a large part in the Civil War. It was the scene of several skirmishes between Union and Confederate forces between June 1861 and late 1862. The area was subjected to massive troop movements at the beginning of the war and guerrilla raids while under Union control, disrupting commerce and rendering local government virtually nonexistent. In August 1865, the Court assembled in the Fairfax County Courthouse for the first time in three years and the village started rebuilding.

After the war ended, Fairfax was in a destitute condition. Much of the countryside had been ravaged, houses had been burned, and many other buildings had been damaged by the Union Forces. The town's spirit had not broken, however, and its people faced up to the task of reconstruction.

The 1870s saw substantial recovery of the area's economy and physical resources, with agricultural production the key component of the local economy. By this time the town was generally called Fairfax Court House, and in 1875 Providence was renamed Fairfax.

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Fairfax began to suffer from business stagnation, probably due to increasing isolation from the surrounding areas. Poor roads and lack of a direct rail link to Alexandria and Washington were contributing factors. The population indeed fell from 376 in 1880 to 200 in 1892 when Fairfax received its charter of incorporation.

Development patterns in the surrounding county reflected investment opportunities brought about by depression of land prices after the Civil War. Population growth in Fairfax County sparked the construction in 1904 of an electric railway line from Washington through Falls Church and Vienna to Fairfax. This marked the beginning of the area's transition from an agricultural base to suburbanization.

Main Street Fairfax, C. 1940

Shortly after 1904, a flurry of building occurred in Fairfax. The National Bank of Fairfax constructed a brick commercial building in 1905 and that same year the *Fairfax Herald* moved into a one-story building at the corner of Main Street and University Drive. Seven years into the twentieth century, this small town and the services it provided for the local farmers were described as "...a thriving town of several hundred inhabitants, with well-paved streets, a national bank, a hotel, excellent general stores, a well-equipped and up-to-date drug store, a prosperous newspaper,...a carriage and wagon factory, private and public schools, four churches..."(*Historical Buildings and Sites*, City of Fairfax, Office of Planning, June 1979).

The transportation links to Washington D.C. increased the tendency of area residents to live in the suburbs. Bus lines established in the 1920s accelerated the patterns, and the rise of automobile use after World War I combined with the concurrent demand for road improvements further changed the nature of local development.

Between 1930 and 1940 several buildings were erected in downtown Fairfax including vernacular structures on Main Street, the National Bank of Fairfax Colonial Revival style a building (now housing Nations Bank), and a Georgian style sanctuary at Truro Church. As the federal government grew during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s and supporting private industries and services relocated to the suburbs, growth skyrocketed. Seven small office buildings were built in the historic downtown to support the growing need for office space. A single-building shopping plaza was erected on Main Street in 1955.

An explosion in single family residential development occurred in the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s, built around the central core of the historic downtown area. In 1959, the Town of Fairfax acquired title to one hundred acres of land which was donated as a site for George Mason College of the University of Virginia (now George Mason University). Incorporated as an independent city in 1961, Fairfax established itself as a distinct local jurisdiction with a small town atmosphere in the heart of Northern Virginia and moved forward into the last half of the twentieth century.

3
Design Profile of the Historic District

The Old Town Fairfax Historic District retains much of its original character despite the rapid growth of the city in the 1960s and 1970s. The widening of streets and the replacement of several historic buildings with parking lots has been a typical response to accommodating the automobile. Nevertheless, many historic buildings remain throughout the district which has several distinctive subareas.

In the downtown there is a variety of nineteenth century styles resulting in two- to three-story buildings which are spaced closely together and constructed of brick or wood. These buildings lend much of the district a continuity and a comfortable "Main Street" scale. Many of the storefronts are of a traditional turn-of-the-century design with a central entry flanked by large

display windows resting on bulkheads and occasionally capped by transom windows. It is interesting to note that there are several frame commercial structures dating from the late-nineteenth century with gable roofs where the end of the gable creates the facade of the building located on Main Street. There are also several one-story commercial frame or brick structures. On the edge of the downtown are several large Queen Anne-styled dwellings of the Victorian era that have been converted into commercial use.

Main Street ca. 1993

Surrounding this commercial core are various large scale dwellings from several eras exhibiting different architectural styles. Their continuity is derived from their two to two-and-one-half story height, their similar setbacks and spacing on lots, and their brick and/or frame materials. The Chain Bridge Road entry to the district from the north is characterized by such residences on expansive and extensively landscaped lots. These large dwellings are executed in Georgian, Federal, and Colonial Revival styles for the most part.

The focal point of the district is the Fairfax County Courthouse Square with the two-story, neo-classically styled, brick courthouse with various later additions, all designed in a similar vocabulary as the original. The entire historic complex is located within a raised park-like setting with large trees and bordered by a stone wall.

While no one architectural style or building type dominates the entire historic district, the similar height, proportion, architectural detailing and close relationship to the street of the buildings create its special character. The wood and brick building materials, symmetrically placed sash windows, a high degree of wall area compared to openings, brick foundations, decorative semicircular fanlights, ornate door surrounds, and porches with columns, are some of the elements typical of nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture.

Other details found in the district include classical porticos and cornices, pedimented dormers, corbeled and shouldered chimneys, projecting bays, shutters, paired windows, stepped fronts, brick corbeling, cresting, awnings, sawtooth cornices, window caps, modillion blocks, and brackets. While early dwellings of the district have multi-paned window sash, later examples reflect the change in architectural tastes and technology that resulted in large two-over-two or one-over-one sash windows. Single and double wood doors can be found throughout the district and may include four or six panels while commercial doors typically have large areas of glass.

Roof forms and materials vary with style and use. As can be expected many of the commercial structures have shed or flat roofs, often concealed by a parapet wall. Early residential styles are for the most part simple gable forms while late-nineteenth-century dwelling roofs

may consist of more complex combinations of gable and hipped elements. Roof materials consist of standing-seam metal, slate, wood shingles and various examples of replacement asphalt shingles.

While brick and wood siding are the dominant building materials, there are also examples of wood shingles, stucco and artificial siding to be found within the historic district. Colors vary and are typically brick red, shades of white or cream trim or natural shades of tan, gray, or green on later styles. The design of additions to historic buildings generally ties in with the original and there are several examples of compatible and sympathetically designed recent structures in the district that take their cues from neighboring historic buildings as well.

Streetscape characteristics of the historic district include narrow sidewalks of brick or concrete, with some brick crosswalks. There is some screening of parking lots either by masonry walls or landscaping. Many of the rear lots of the commercial properties are used for parking. There is extensive and for the most part, well maintained landscaping throughout the district including street trees, planters, flower boxes, foundation plantings, and hedges or rows of shrubs. Other walls are made of brick or stone and there are several examples of iron or wood fences. Street furniture elements consist of metal trash containers, wooden planters, and benches constructed of metal frames with wood. Overhead wires are present in much of the district and streetlights consist typically of cobra-head lights on wooden poles. While much of the district is built up, there are several open spaces scattered throughout the area including the courthouse lawn as well as well maintained lawns in front of residences and commercial buildings that are set back from the street.

Signs throughout the district are appropriately designed, sized, placed and maintained for the most part. There are various examples of free standing, flat building mounted, projecting, or window signs that reflect the historic character of the district.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Although the City of Fairfax was originally settled as a town in the eighteenth century and prospered and grew in the nineteenth century, many of the surviving buildings in the historic district, especially along Main Street, date from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The character of the district is for the most part created by the different architectural styles of these eras. Each style has its own distinctive features, as expressed in materials, forms, and decorative details. Even within the same style, however, different budgets, tastes, and building sites resulted in a variety of appearances. Some buildings exhibit elements from several styles which also varied according to the function of the building, such as commercial, institutional or residential uses. The following are the architectural styles found within the Old Town Fairfax Historic District.

Vernacular

By far the most popular building "style" in the Old Town Fairfax Historic District is what is known as "vernacular." This is a catch-all category in which buildings do not follow any identifiable style. These structures were built in a simple, functional manner with little ornamentation. Many of the commercial buildings along Main Street and Chain Bridge Road are excellent examples of this style of building; utilitarian yet attractive additions to the district's streetscape.

The simplicity of the vernacular buildings should not diminish their importance to the visual fabric of the district, primarily because they represent a prevalent type of building. Indeed, the City's oldest surviving structure, earlier called Earp's

Ratcliffe-Allison House

Ordinary and officially known as the Ratcliffe-Allison House (built 1805 - 1813), is a vernacular building. Its simple brick construction and minimal detailing typify a vernacular residential structure in the early village of Providence.

Federal

The Federal style evolved in the early years of the American Republic (hence its name) and was popular for the first two decades of the nineteenth century. The federal style is typified

10364 Main Street

by tall proportions, symmetrical facades, ornate door surrounds, decorative fanlights, and simple gable roof designs. The only surviving example of this style in the historic district is the property at 10364 Main Street (built ca. 1810, remodeled). Its porch, also a popular Federal detail, was removed in the twentieth century. The County Courthouse, designed by James Wren, represents the Roman Revival style, which is closely related to this period.

Greek Revival

The Greek Revival style flourished in the United States, and Fairfax as well, in the 1830s and

10520 Main Street

1840s. It is typified by Doric or Ionic columns, pilasters, pedimented gables and horizontal transoms over entrances. The best example of this style in Fairfax is the Oliver House at 4023 Chain Bridge Road (built ca. 1835; remodeled, 1984). Also, the original configuration of the Truro rectory at 10520 Main Street (ca. 1830, addition 1911) is a good example of this style.

Italianate

The Italianate style enjoyed popularity around the time of the Civil War. It is modeled after Northern Italian villas, and its elaborate features include low roofs, overhanging eaves with brackets, and arcaded porches. One of the few

Fairfax County Jail

examples of the Italianate style in the District is the old Fairfax County Jail on Main Street (built 1886 - 1891). It has an ornately decorated wood porch on the front facade. The influence of the Italianate can also be seen in the brackets on several vernacular commercial structures on Main Street.

Queen Anne

These late nineteenth century dwellings are characterized by a complex roof, vertical proportions, asymmetrical facades, and a wrap-around porch. More elaborate examples may be decorated with brackets, balusters, window surrounds, and other sawn millwork and use several surface materials like shingles, wood siding, and brick. Roof turrets, decorative tall

10381 Main Street

brick chimneys, and a variety of gable forms highlight the skylines of these larger-scale residences. Several of these dwellings can be found on the edges of the downtown.

Colonial Revival

The popularity of the Colonial Revival period in American architecture spanned the years between 1870 and the 1930s. In a conscious return to elements of the earlier Georgian and Federal periods of American architectural history, these buildings often have a rectangular plan and a symmetrical facade. Roofs may be gable or hipped and details are often classical. Porticos over the entrance are common. Techniques replicated colonial detailing exactly, as well as exaggerated them or combined them with other stylistic features. Buildings such as Old Town Hall (built ca. 1900) and the National Bank of Fairfax (1931) utilize such details as classical columns, swan's neck pediments, pilasters and round-arched windows. The bank, as well as the additions to the Fairfax County Courthouse, are excellent examples of Colonial Revival architecture in Fairfax as are several of the large scale residences on Chain Bridge Road. Probably the best examples of Georgian Revival architecture in the district are the Ford Building, and the Truro Chapel built in 1933.

National Bank of Fairfax

Retail/Commercial

Traditional retail/commercial buildings have one or two stories with a large transparent area for display of merchandise on the first floor. This display may be a traditional glass storefront with a recessed entry or a prominent entry flanked by very large windows. Additional light may enter the storefront through transom windows above the entryway and display windows.

4015 Chain Bridge Road

Upper stories originally were used for storage, office, or residences and generally have traditional windows in the upper facade. Cornices are the decorative element located at the roofline and often above the storefront as well. Several of these designs have gable fronts formed by the gable end of the building facing the street.

PARKING
PAVING MATERIALS
LANDSCAPING
LIGHTING
FENCES AND WALLS
GARAGES, SHEDS
AND OTHER STRUCTURES
APPURTENANCES

4
Private Site Guidelines in the Historic District

The relationship between a historic building and its site, landscape features, outbuildings, and other elements within the property boundary all contribute to the historic district's overall image. Site features should be considered an important part of any project to be reviewed by the Board of Architectural Review. In reviewing site-by-site cases the Board should continually consider the context of the entire district. Elements in public ownership, such as sidewalks, streets, landscaping, and street lighting, also contribute to the character of the district (see Chapter 13: Guidelines for Public Improvements).

These site elements fall into the following categories:

PARKING

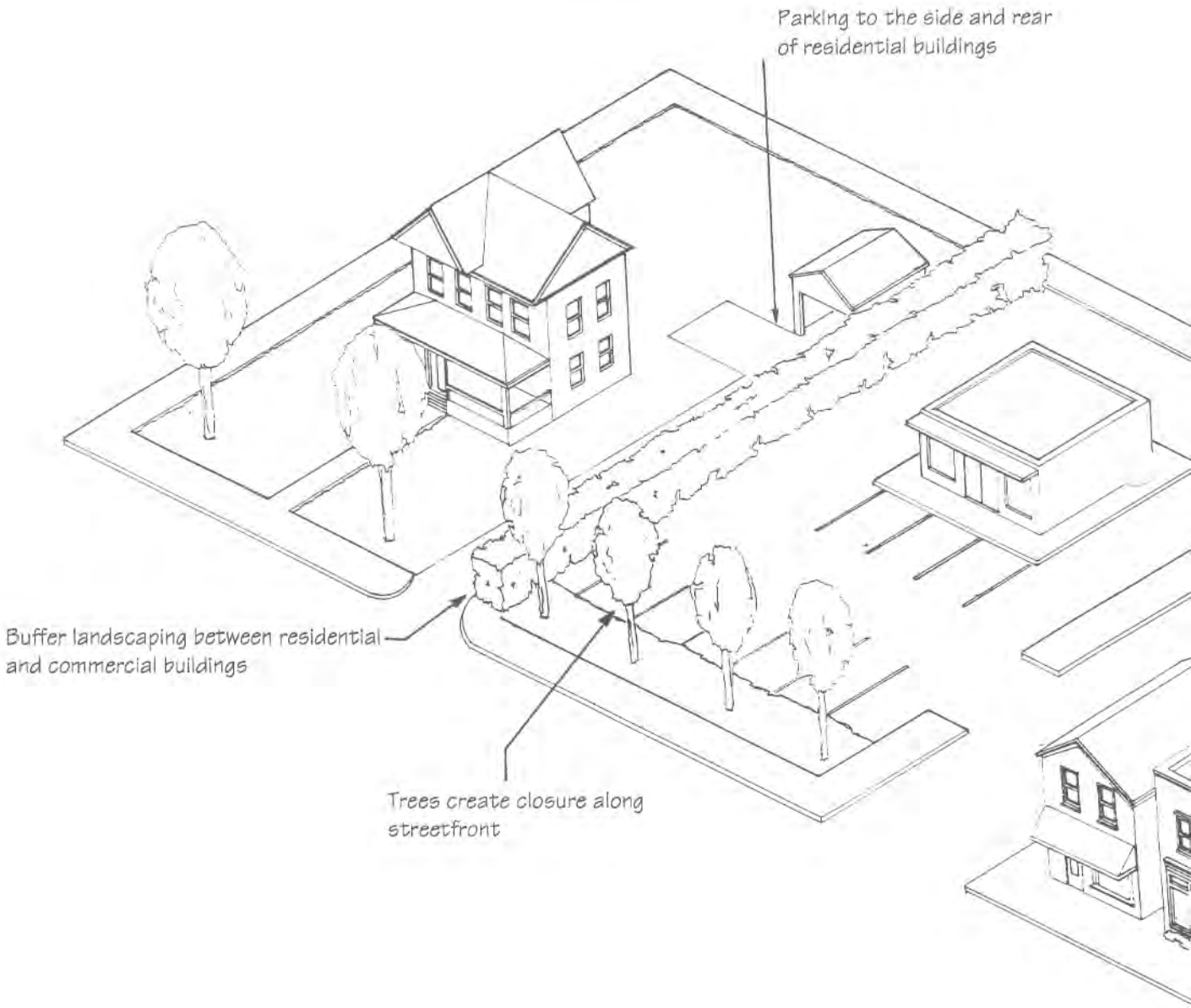
1. Do not allow parking in the front yard of either commercial or residential buildings.
2. Commercial buildings in the downtown should provide parking in the rear of the lot or in public lots.
3. Residential buildings should have driveways with parking areas only at the sides and rear of the building.
4. Landscape and screen parking areas.

PAVING MATERIALS

1. Use appropriate traditional paving materials like brick, stone, and scored concrete.
2. Asphalt use should be limited to driveways and parking areas. Do not use to repair sidewalks or use for drainage areas.

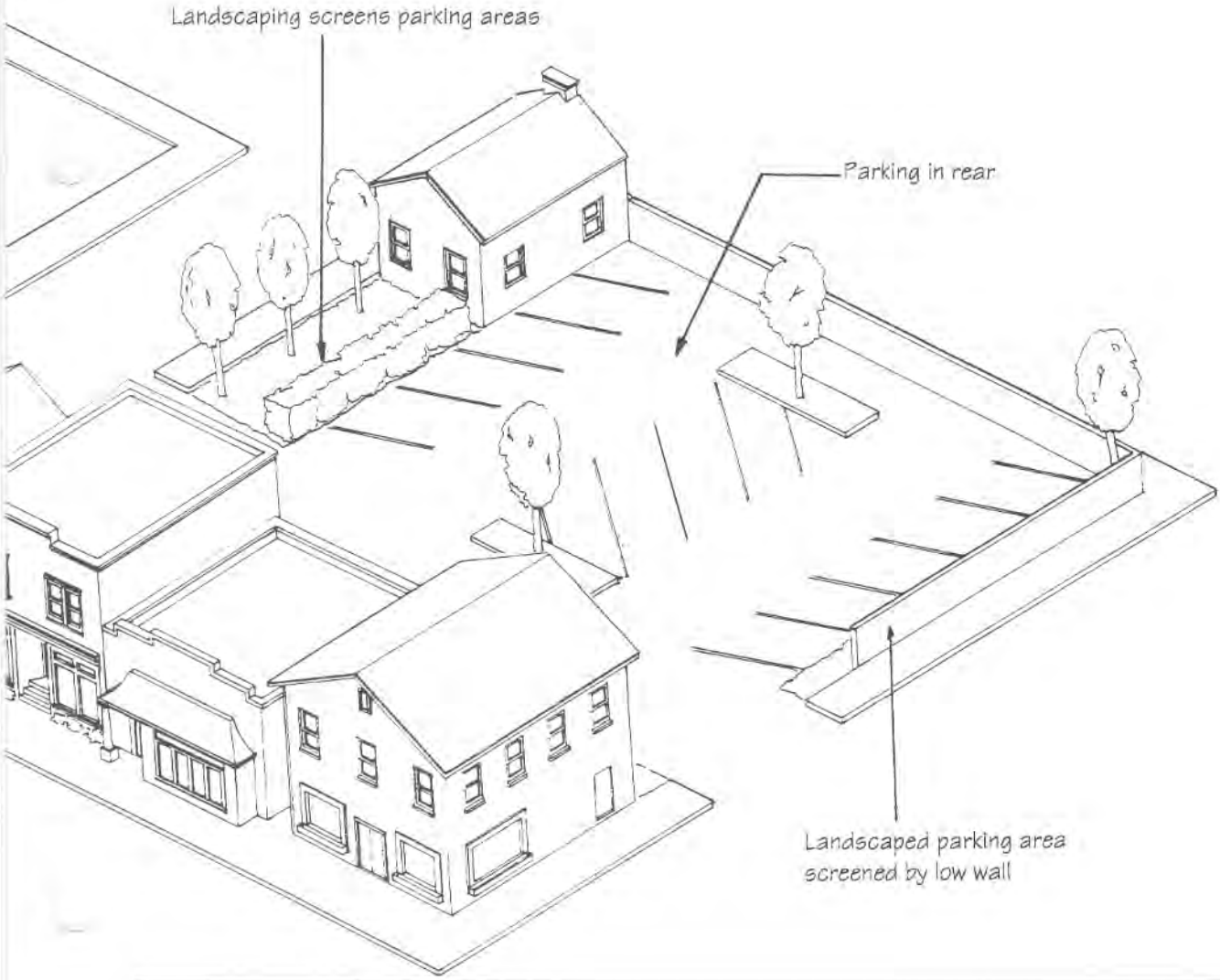
LANDSCAPING

1. Landscaping should be used to complement the



buildings of the district and to enhance the streetscape.

2. Landscaping should help complete the sense of closure along street frontages, and should be compatible with surrounding landscaping.
3. Existing trees should be maintained and protected whenever possible.
4. Use trees and plants that are traditional or indigenous to the area.
5. Avoid removing live trees or shrubs.
6. Replace diseased or dead plants, especially large trees, with like species of a significant size.
7. Choose ground cover plantings that are compatible with adjacent sites, existing site conditions, and the character of the building.
8. Select mulching and edging materials carefully and do not use plastic edgings, lava, crushed rock, or other historically unsuitable materials.



LIGHTING

1. In residential areas, use lighting fixtures that are understated and complement the residential quality of the surroundings.
2. Avoid lights that are too bright, such as "crime" lights and bright floodlights, when surrounding lighting is subdued.
3. If a more intense light source is needed, metal halide is preferable to high pressure sodium vapor, which casts a yellowish light, or mercury vapor, which casts a cool white light.
4. In the downtown, consider special lighting of key landmarks and facades.
5. Encourage merchants to leave their display window lights on in the evening to provide extra illumination at the sidewalk level.
6. Coordinate lighting in private parking lots to match public fixtures.
7. New lighting fixtures should be compatible with the design of the building.
8. The height of freestanding lights on private sites except for parking lots should follow the zoning code, and all light should be directed downward into the site.
9. A combination of free-standing and wall-mounted fixtures is recommended in order to yield varied levels of lighting.

FENCES AND WALLS

1. Maintain existing materials that add to the character of the historic district such as stone walls, hedges, wooden picket fences, and wrought-iron fences.
2. When a portion of a fence needs replacing, salvage original parts for a prominent location. Match old fencing in material, height, and detail. If this is not possible, use a simplified design of similar materials and height.
3. For new fences or walls, use materials that relate to materials in the neighborhood and take design clues from nearby historic fences and walls.
4. Avoid using chain-link fencing, split rail fences, and concrete block walls.
5. When appropriate, use streetfront fences or walls of traditional materials and design that do not screen historic structures.
6. Relate commercial privacy fences to the materials of the building. If the commercial property adjoins a neighborhood, use a brick or stone wall, a wood fence, or a hedge as a buffer.

GARAGES, SHEDS AND OTHER STRUCTURES

1. Choose designs that are compatible with the major buildings on the site or take clues from older outbuildings in the area.
2. Use a traditionally pitched roof which is generally steeper than most modern prefabricated outbuildings and use traditional materials such as wood or brick.
3. Avoid placing new outbuildings in front of the dwelling. If the design complements the main building, however, it can be visible from primary elevations or streets.
4. Place metal or wood prefabricated utility sheds in areas that are not visible from primary elevations or streets.

APPURTENANCES

1. Place site appurtenances, such as overhead wires, utility poles and meters, antennae, exterior heat exchangers, and trash containers, where they are least likely to detract from the character of the site and screen with landscaping or fences as necessary.
2. Encourage the installation of utility services underground on private property.

Architectural Details
Chimneys
Cornices
Entrances, Porches and Doors
Foundations
Masonry
Metal
Roof
Storefronts
Synthetic Siding
Windows
Wood

5
Guidelines for Rehabilitation in the Historic District

NOTE

This chapter is divided into sections that address rehabilitation of materials and elements of historic buildings and is organized in alphabetical order. These guidelines are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation Projects as listed in Chapter 1 and should be reviewed before beginning a rehabilitation project. For more detailed technical information see the bibliography and ask the Zoning Office for guidance.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

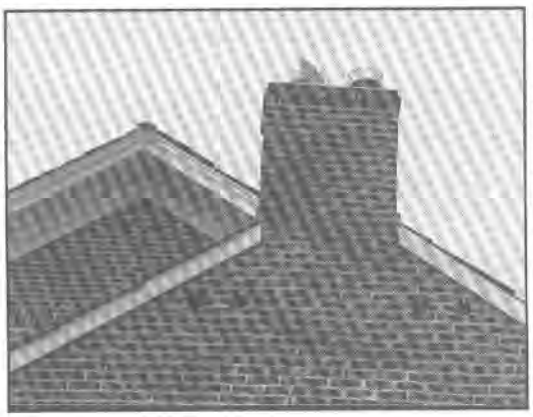
1. Original architectural detailing (bargeboards, dentils, finials, railings, etc.) should be restored and preserved rather than removed and replaced.

2. If the detailing is deteriorated beyond repair, it should be duplicated using original building materials wherever possible, or using an acceptable substitute which matches the original in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.
3. Detailing which was not originally used on a building, or which represents another architectural era, should not be added to the building. This includes dormers, dentils, shutters, cupolas, etc. which are sometimes added in an attempt to "colonialize buildings".

CHIMNEYS

Chimneys and flues are important design elements of many buildings in the historic district.

1. Do not remove chimneys or flues, even though they may no longer be in use.
2. Clean chimney flues on a regular basis if the flue is in use.

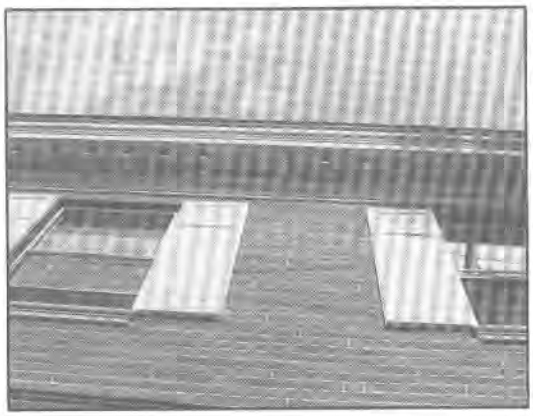


3. Brick chimney caps (the top of the chimney) are constantly exposed to extreme weather conditions and frequently may need repointing. Do not cover brick chimney caps with a coat of stucco if the masonry needs repointing. See the section of this chapter on Masonry for more detailed guidance.
4. If a hood, shield or screening is needed to protect the flue from moisture or birds, make sure that the appearance of this covering does not detract from the overall design of the chimney.

CORNICES

The cornice occurs at the junction between the roof and the wall. On commercial buildings it may be a decorated classical projection or a flat decorative band within the wall material.

1. Keep the cornice well sealed and anchored and maintain the gutter systems and flashing.
2. Repair rather than replace the cornice. Do not remove elements such as brackets or blocks which are part of the original composition without replacing them with new ones of a like design. Match materials, decorative details, and profiles of the existing original cornice design when making repairs.



3. Do not replace an original cornice with a new one that conveys a different period, style, or theme from that of the building. If the cornice is missing, the replacement should be based on physical evidence, or barring that, be compatible with the original building.

ENTRANCES, PORCHES, AND DOORS

Entrances and porches are often the primary focal points of a historic building and, because of their decoration and articulation, help define the style of the structure. Entrances are functional and ceremonial elements for all buildings. Porches have traditionally been a social gathering point as well as a transition area between the exterior and interior of the residence.

The important focal point of an entrance or porch is the door. Doors are often a character-defining feature of the architectural style of a building. Residences may have a variety of door types reflecting the variety of styles of residential buildings. Commercial buildings typically have their original wood and glass store doors or later aluminum doors.

1. Repair damaged elements, matching the detail of the existing original fabric. Reuse hardware and locks that are original or important to the historical evolution of the building.

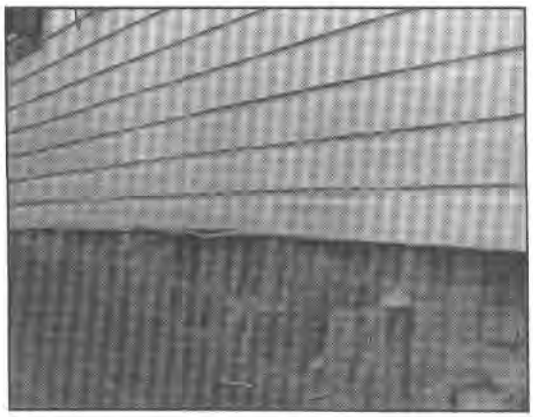
2. Replace an entire porch only if it is too deteriorated to repair or is completely missing. The new porch should match the original as closely as possible.
3. Do not strip entrances and porches of historic material and details. Give more importance to front or side porches than to utilitarian back porches.
4. Avoid substituting the original doors with stock doors.
5. Do not remove or radically change entrances and porches important in defining the building's overall historic character. Avoid adding incompatible decorative elements or adding a new entrance to the primary elevation.

6. Do not enclose porches on primary elevations and avoid enclosing porches on secondary elevations in a manner that radically changes the historic appearance.

FOUNDATIONS

The care and maintenance of a building's foundation are extremely important to the overall stability of the entire structure. Most of the buildings in the historic district have a masonry foundation constructed of brick or stone.

1. Insure that the foundation mortar joints remain properly repointed. See the section of this chapter on Masonry for more detailed guidance.
2. If moisture is penetrating the foundation, seek the advice of an architect or engineer experienced in working with historic buildings to recommend a treatment plan to correct this condition.



3. Do not apply a stucco coating over brick or stone in an attempt to correct a moisture problem.
4. Retain any decorative vents that are original to the building.
5. Repoint or rebuild deteriorated porch piers, matching materials as closely as possible.

MASONRY

Masonry includes brick, stone, terra cotta, concrete, stucco, tile, and mortar. Masonry is used on cornices, pediments, lintels, sills, and decorative features, as well as for wall surfaces. Color, texture, mortar joint type, and patterns of the masonry help define the overall character of a building.

1. Retain masonry features that are important in defining the overall character of the building.
2. Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove heavy soiling.
3. Clean unpainted masonry with the gentlest means possible. The best method is low-pressure water wash with detergents, using a natural bristle brush and a garden hose.

4. Do not use abrasive cleaning methods such as sandblasting or excessively high-pressure water washes.
5. Use chemical cleaners cautiously. Do not clean with chemical methods that damage masonry and do not leave chemical cleaners on the masonry longer than recommended. Test the cleaner on a small inconspicuous part of the building.
6. Do not apply waterproof, water-repellent, or non-historic coatings.
7. When repairing masonry remove deteriorated mortar by carefully hand-raking the joints to avoid damaging the masonry. Do not remove mortar with electric saws or hammers that damage the surrounding masonry. Duplicate mortar in strength, composition, color and texture.
8. Repair damaged masonry features by patching, piecing in, or consolidating to match original instead of replacing an entire masonry feature if possible.

9. Repair stucco by removing loose material and patching with a new material that is similar in composition, color, and texture.
10. Generally leave unpainted masonry unpainted.
11. If painted masonry needs repainting, follow these steps:
    a.) Remove deteriorated paint to the next sound layer by hand-scraping. Do not completely remove paint that is well adhered, as breaking that bond could damage the masonry.
    b.) Clean with a low-pressure water wash if the building is dirty.
    c.) Allow masonry to dry for at least fourteen days before applying paint.
    d.) Prime with an appropriate masonry primer.
    e.) Repaint with an appropriate masonry paint system recommended by a paint manufacturer.

METALS

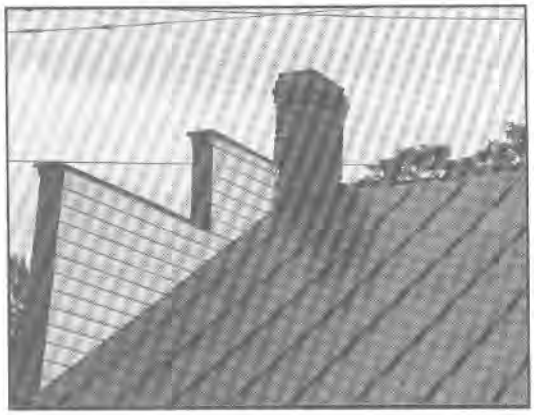
With the rise of the industrial revolution in the nineteenth century, a variety of new metals began to appear in building construction. Cast iron, steel, pressed tin, copper, aluminum, nickel, bronze, galvanized sheet iron, and zinc were used at various times for different architectural features. Many decorative elements on late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century buildings appear to be wood but are actually metal.

1. Inspect metal surfaces for signs of corrosion, mechanical breakdown, and connection failure. Eliminate excessive moisture problems. Maintain existing paint coatings or other protective finishes.
2. Clean gently the painted surfaces of metals by hand scraping or brushing with natural bristle brushes to remove loose and peeling paint in preparation for repainting.
3. Clean cast iron and iron alloys (hard metals) with a low-pressure, dry grit blasting (80 to 100 pounds per square inch) if gentle means do not remove old paint properly. Do not sandblast copper, lead, and tin. These can be cleaned with chemicals or heat.
4. When repairing metals use compatible materials. Do not place incompatible metals together without a separation.
5. Aluminum, fiberglass, or wood can be used to construct missing elements if it is not technically or financially feasible to reconstruct the original material.

ROOF

One of the most important elements of a structure, the roof serves as the "cover" to protect the building from the elements. Good roof maintenance is absolutely critical for the roof's preservation and for the preservation of the rest of the structure.

1. Retain roof elements such as chimneys, skylights, and light wells that contribute to the style and character of the building.
2. When replacing a roof, match original materials as closely as possible.
3. Place solar collectors and antennae on non-character defining roofs or roofs of non-historic adjacent buildings.
4. Do not add new elements such as vents, skylights, or additional stories that would be visible on the primary elevations of the building. If additional stories are added, they should not overpower the scale of the original building nor should their addition destroy key architectural elements of the original building.



STOREFRONTS

Many of the traditional storefronts on Fairfax's Main Street date from the turn of the twentieth century. To determine what type of storefront your building may have had originally, conduct pictorial research to find the appearance of the original storefront and any early changes.

1. Retain all elements, materials, and features that are original to the building or are early remodelings and repair them as necessary.
2. Remove any inappropriate elements, materials, signs, or canopies that were added later and obscure original architectural elements. Covering up windows, cornices, decorative features, or significant portions of the wall alters the building's proportions and changes its appearance.
3. Conduct exploratory demolition to determine what original elements remain and their condition.
4. Restore as many original elements as possible, particularly the materials, windows, decorative details, and cornice.
5. Reconstruct missing elements (such as cornices, transoms, and bulkheads) if documentation is available. Otherwise, design new elements that respect the character, materials, and design of the building.

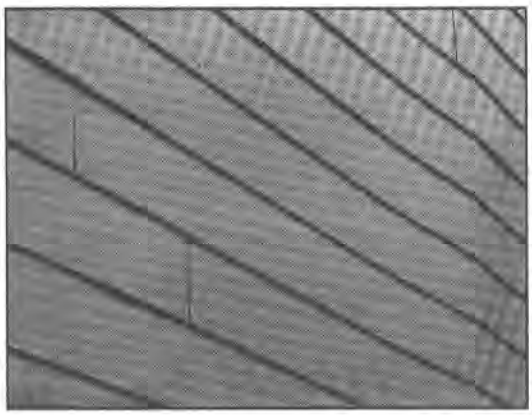
6. Avoid using materials and elements that are incompatible with the building or district, including aluminum-frame windows and doors, natural aluminum panels or display framing, enameled panels, textured wood or artificial siding, wood shingles, mansard roofs, metal awnings, coach lanterns, small-paned windows, plastic shutters, inoperable shutters, or shutters on windows where they never previously existed. False historical appearances like "Colonial," "Olde English," or other theme designs, should not be used.

SYNTHETIC SIDING

A building's historic character is a combination of its design, age, setting, and materials. The exterior walls of a building, because they are so visible, play a very important role in defining its historic appearance. Wood clapboards, wood shingles, wood board-and-batten, brick, stone, or a combination of the above materials all have distinctive characteristics. Synthetic materials can never have the same patina, texture, or light-reflective qualities.

Modern materials have changed over time, but have included asbestos, asphalt, vinyl, and aluminum and have been used to artificially create the appearance of brick, stone, shingle, and wood siding surfaces.

1. Avoid applying synthetic siding as it can make maintenance more difficult because it covers up potential problems that can become serious. Siding, once it dents or fades, needs painting just as frequently as wood.
2. Remove synthetic siding and restore original building material when possible.
3. Apply synthetic siding over existing siding only when the original is severely deteriorated and cannot be repaired or replaced with a like material. In these cases, attempt to match the size, type, style, and surface appearance of the original material as closely as possible. Insure that any moisture, rot, or infestation problems are corrected before covering up these areas with the synthetic materials. Do not remove historic decorative materials to facilitate installation of the synthetic cladding. Try to minimize the damage to the original siding when installing artificial siding.



4. Consider retaining the original materials on the primary elevations of the building and using synthetic siding only on secondary elevations.

WINDOWS

Windows add light to the interior of a building, provide ventilation, and allow a visual link to the outside. They also play a major part in defining a building's particular style. Because of the wide variety of architectural styles and periods of construction within the district, there is a corresponding variation of styles, types, and sizes of windows.

On commercial buildings; the upper facade contains windows which help define the charac-

ter of the building and may provide a pattern of openings with neighboring buildings for the street wall of the entire block. Facade windows may be more decorated than windows on secondary elevations, which are more utilitarian and often have been blocked in or covered up.

Windows are one of the major character-defining features on residential buildings and can be varied by different designs of sills, panes, sashes, lintels, decorative caps, and shutters. They may occur in regular intervals or in asymmetrical patterns. Their size may highlight various bay divisions in the building. All of the windows may be the same in one house or there may be a variety of types which give emphasis to certain parts of the building.

1. Retain original windows. Insure that all hardware is in good operating condition. Insure that caulk and glazing putty are intact and that water drains off the sills.
2. Replace windows only when they are missing or beyond repair. Reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or old photographs. Do not use inappropriate materials or finishes that radically change the sash, depth of reveal, muntin configuration (spacing of the divider strips of wood or metal), the reflective quality or color of the glazing, or the appearance of the frame.

3. Repair original windows by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing. Wood that appears to be in bad condition because of peeling paint or separated joints often can in fact be repaired.
4. Uncover and repair covered-up windows and reinstall windows where they have been blocked in. If the window is no longer needed, the glass should be retained and the back side frosted, screened, or shuttered so that it appears from the outside to be in use.
5. Do not change the number, location, size, or glazing pattern of windows by cutting new openings, blocking in windows, or installing replacement sash that does not fit the window opening.
6. Improve thermal efficiency with weather stripping, storm windows (preferably interior), caulking, interior shades, and if appropriate for the building, blinds and awnings. The dividers of the storm window frames should match those of the original window. Avoid aluminum colored storm sash. Avoid replacing multi-paned sash with new thermal sash utilizing false muntins. These clip-in window pane dividers are too flat to resemble real muntins. Do not replace windows or transoms with fixed thermal glazing. Do not use tinted glass on major facades of the building.
7. Use shutters only on windows that show evidence of their use in the past. They should be wood (rather than metal or vinyl) and should be mounted on hinges. Avoid shutters on composite or bay windows.

WOOD

The flexibility of wood has made it the most common building material throughout much of America's building history. Because it can be easily shaped, wood is used for a broad range of decorative elements in addition to major elements such as framing, siding, and shingles.

1. Keep wood free from water infiltration and wood-boring pests.
2. Keep all surfaces primed and painted. (See Chapter 11: Guidelines for Painting for proper painting procedures.)
3. Recaulk joints where moisture might penetrate a building.

4. Repair rotted or missing sections rather than replace the entire element. Match existing materials and details. Epoxies can be used to patch, piece or consolidate parts.
5. Replace wood elements only when they are rotted beyond repair. Match the original in material and design, by substitute materials that convey the same visual appearance or use surviving material.
6. Base the design of reconstructed elements on pictorial or physical evidence from the actual building rather than from similar buildings in the area. Complement the existing details in size, scale, and material.

Building Types
Siting
Complexity of Forms
Directional Expression
Massing and Footprint
Height and Width
Scale
Roof Design
Storefronts and Entrances
Doors and Windows
Porches
Foundations
Materials and Textures
Color
Architectural Details
and Decorative Features
Exterior Lighting
Additions

6
Guidelines for New Construction in the Historic District

The following guidelines offer general recommendations in the design for all new buildings in the Old Town Fairfax Historic District. The intent of these guidelines is not to be overly specific or to dictate certain designs to owners and designers. The intent is also not to encourage copying or mimicking particular historic styles. These guidelines are intended to provide a general design framework for new construction. Good designers can take these clues and have the freedom to design appropriate, new architecture for Fairfax's historic district.

These criteria are all important when considering whether proposed new buildings are appropriate and compatible; however, the degree of importance of each criterion varies within each area as conditions vary. For instance, setback

and spacing between buildings may be more important than roof forms or materials since there is more variety in regard to the last two criteria on most streets. Not all criteria need to be met in every example of new construction.

New additions which have a significant visual impact can justifiably be categorized as "new construction" and should adhere to the following criteria as applicable.

SPECIAL NOTE

Besides the guidelines for new construction contained in this chapter, various articles of the City of Fairfax's Zoning Ordinance and Building Code deal with new construction. These relevant sections should be thoroughly reviewed by any property owner before undertaking new construction. There are several permits and approvals (depending on the particular project) that must be secured from the Zoning Office and Code Enforcement Office before construction can begin.

BUILDING TYPES WITHIN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

When designing new buildings in the historic district one needs to recognize that while there is an overall distinctive district character, there is, nevertheless, a great variety of historic building types, styles, and scales throughout the district. Likewise, there are several types of new construction that might be built within the district. The design parameters of these new buildings will differ depending on the following types:

1. Infill

Infill buildings are the traditional downtown building form that fills in holes in a larger block of buildings. This type of building generally has a limited setback, attaches to or is very close to neighboring structures, and takes many of its design cues from the adjoining buildings.

2. Multi-lot

Often new commercial buildings will be constructed on sites much larger than the traditionally sized lots. Existing traditional buildings are twenty to forty feet wide and fifty to one hundred feet deep. These assembled parcels can translate into new structures whose scale and mass may overwhelm neighboring existing structures. Therefore, while this building type needs to respond to the various building conditions of the site, it also should employ design techniques to reduce its visual presence.

3. Institutional

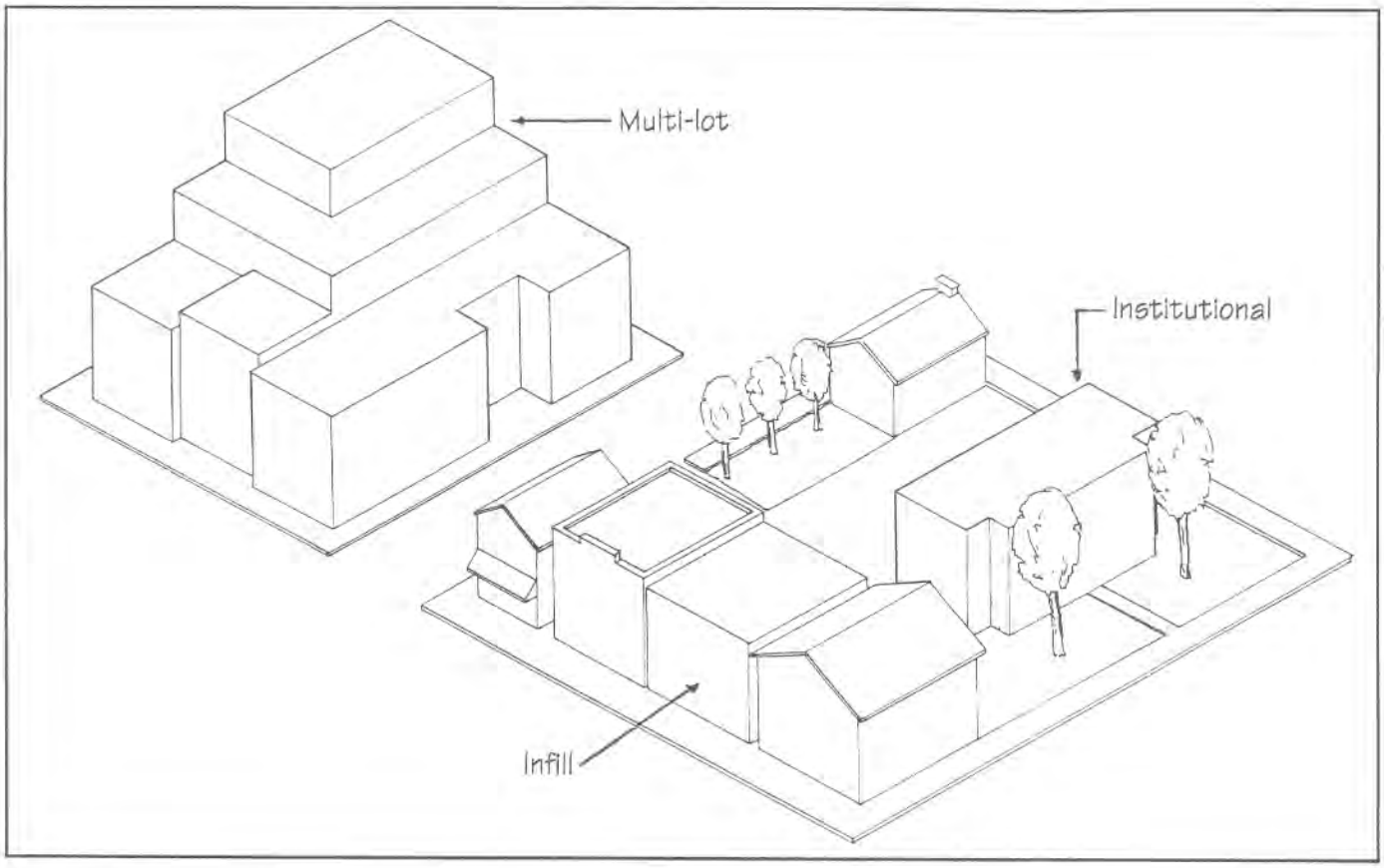
Government buildings, churches, schools, and libraries are all structures that represent a unique aspect of community life and frequently have special requirements that relate to their distinct uses. For these reasons, these buildings usually are free standing and their scale and architectural arrangements may be of a different nature than their residential and historic neighbors but their materials should blend with the character of the district.

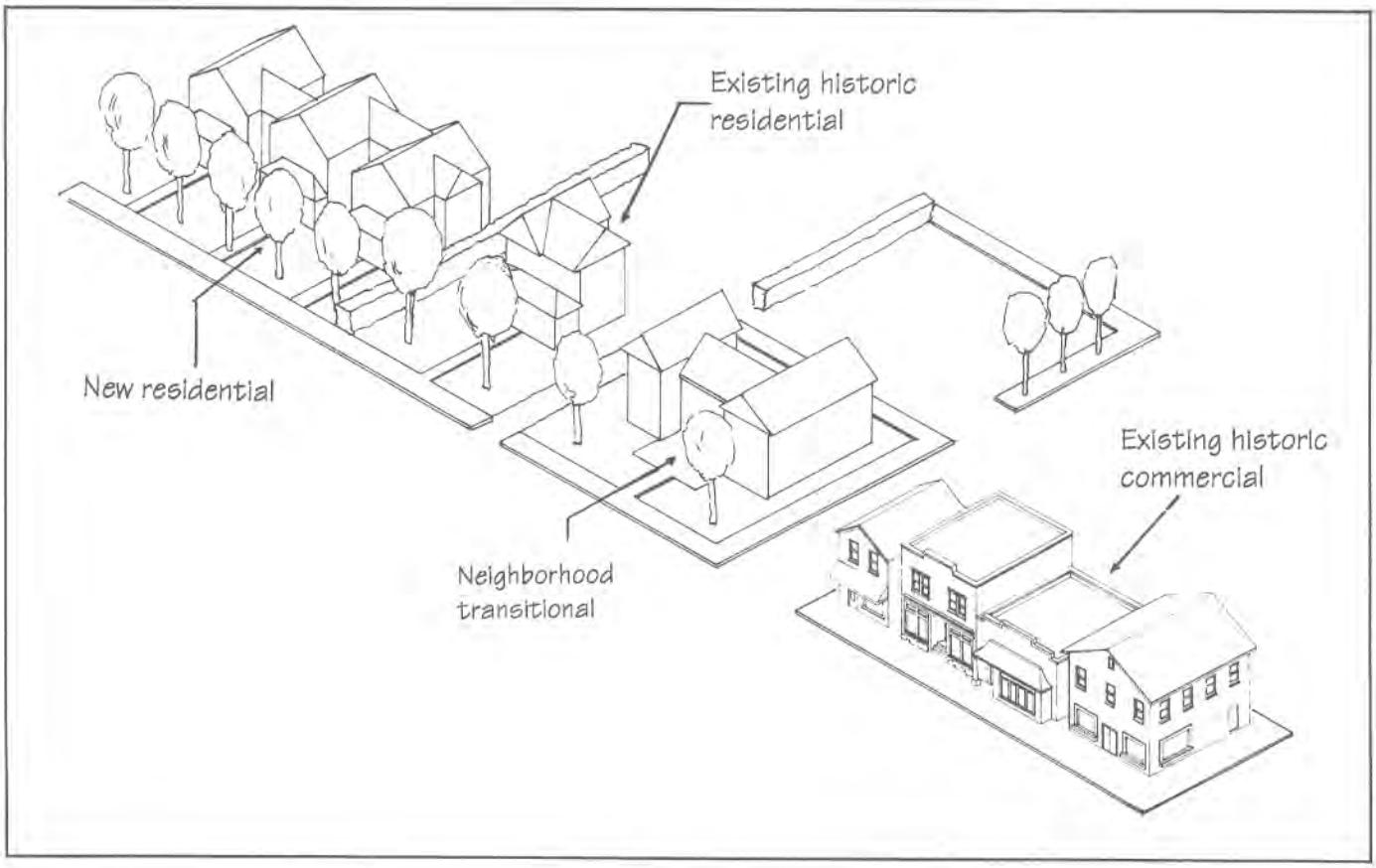
4. Neighborhood Transitional

Neighborhood transitional commercial buildings are located on sites that adjoin residential areas. The design of these buildings should attempt to relate to the character of the adjacent neighborhood as well as to the commercial core. While these buildings may be larger in scale than residential structures, their materials, roof forms and massing should relate to residential forms.

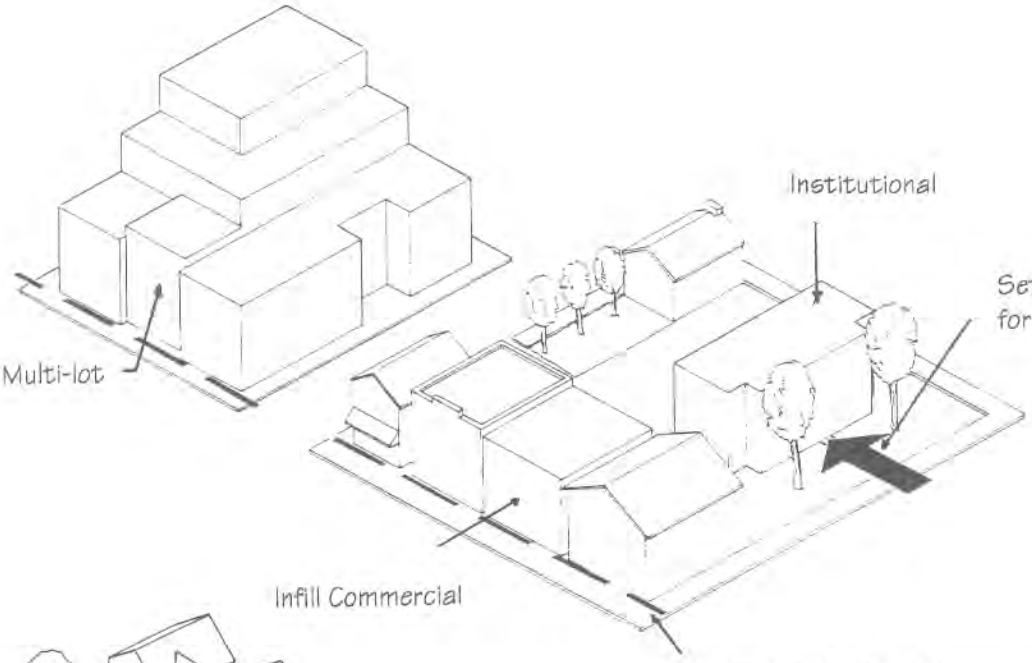
5. Residential

While there is limited opportunity to construct many more residential structures, there is the possibility of the occasional new house appearing in the district. Its design should take its cues from neighboring historic residences.

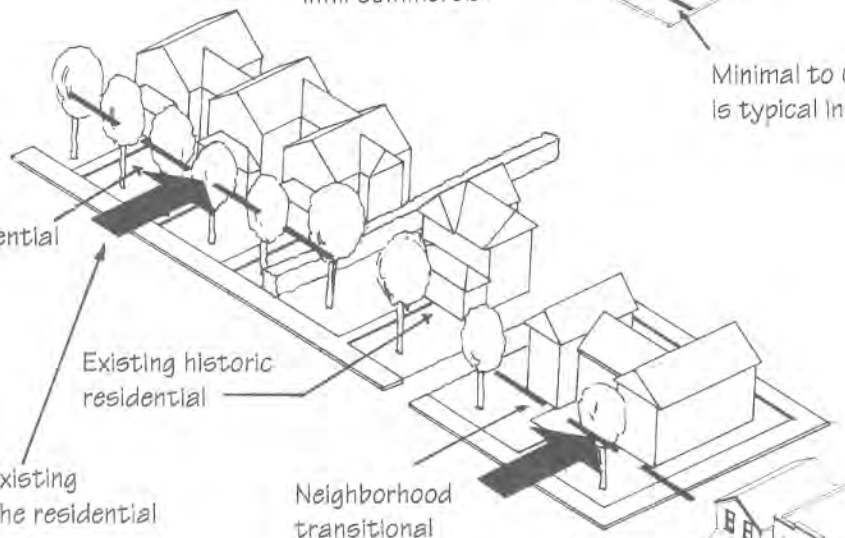

Multi-lot
Institutional
Infill

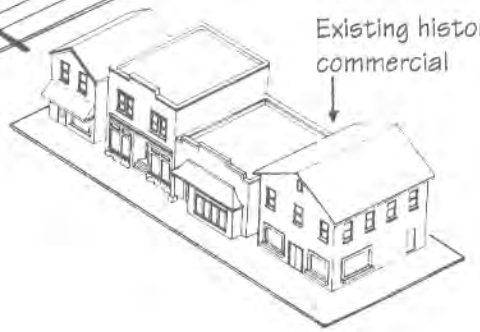

Existing historic residential
New residential
Existing historic commercial
Neighborhood transitional

Setback

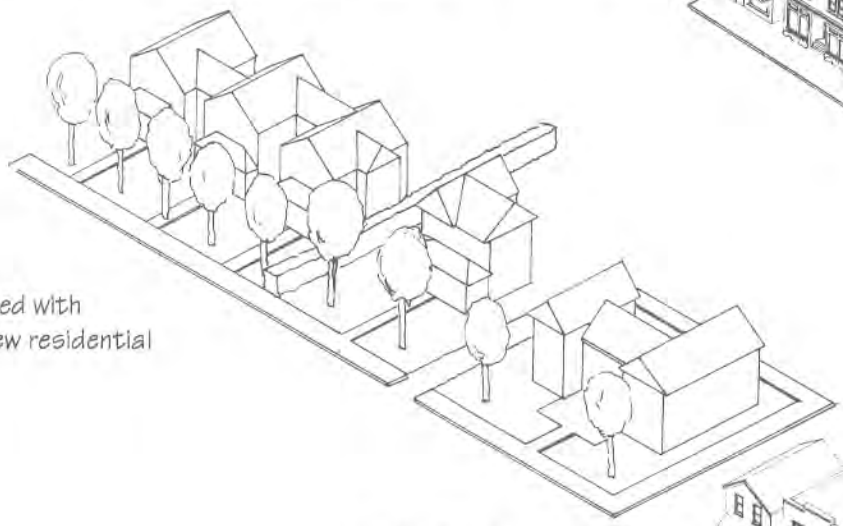


Setback





Spacing



Spacing can be created with building massing in new residential construction

0'-5' spacing is typical in the commercial area

RESIDENTIAL

COMMERCIAL

SITING

For the purposes of these guidelines, site refers not only to the area of ground that the building sits on, but also to the position of the building on the site (setback and spacing).

Front setback is the required area between the property line and the front wall of the building as further defined in the Fairfax Zoning Ordinance. See the zoning ordinance for the detailed requirements for front yard and minimum setbacks.

Spacing between buildings depends on the size of the lot, the size of the building, and side-yard setback requirements. Consistent spacing between a row of buildings helps to establish an overall rhythm along a street. See the zoning ordinance for detailed requirements.

Site also includes a variety of elements such as parking, outbuildings, landscaping, and fences which are covered in Chapter 4: Private Site Guidelines in the Historic District. Siting of new buildings and structures should be established only after the setbacks, views, and locations of surrounding buildings have been considered. Buildings and structures should be sited in such a way as to continue the closure of space provided by existing buildings in the historic district.

1. Construct new downtown buildings with a minimal setback in order to reinforce the traditional street wall.
2. Avoid deep setbacks or open corner plazas on corner buildings in the downtown.
3. Keep residential setbacks the average of the setbacks of neighboring dwellings on either side of the new building.
4. For institutional buildings, either reinforce the street wall through a minimal setback, or use a deep setback within a landscaped area to emphasize the civic function.
5. Maintain existing consistency of spacing in the area. New residences should be spaced similarly to the average spacing between houses on that block.
6. Commercial buildings in areas that have a well-defined street wall should have minimal spacing between them.
7. In areas that do not have consistent spacing, consider limiting spacing in order to establish an overall rhythm.

COMPLEXITY OF BUILDING FORM

The overall form of a building relates to a combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections, and roof shapes. A building's form, or shape, can be simple (a box) or complex (a combination of many boxes used with projections or indentations). The level of complexity usually relates directly to the style or type of building. Forms may be either symmetrical where the building is the same on either side of a central axis or it may be asymmetrical where the building is different on either side of the axis. Many of the buildings in Old Town Fairfax's Historic District have relatively simple building forms.

Simple

Complex

1. Use forms in new construction that relate to those of existing neighboring buildings on the street.
2. If desired, give new civic or institutional buildings more complex forms, reflecting their distinctive use and functional needs.

DIRECTIONAL EXPRESSION/ PROPORTION

This guideline addresses the relationship of height and width of the front elevation of a building mass. A building is horizontal, vertical, or square in its proportions and directional expression. Respect the directional expression of the majority of the surrounding buildings.

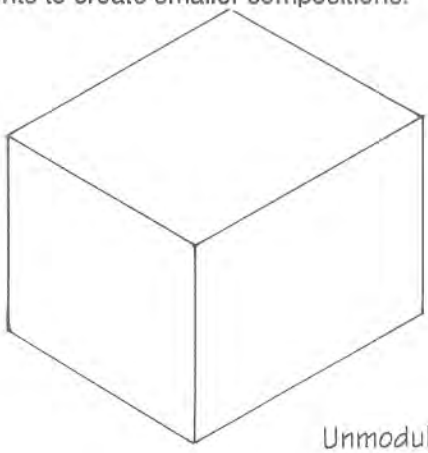
Horizontal

Horizontal (left) and Vertical

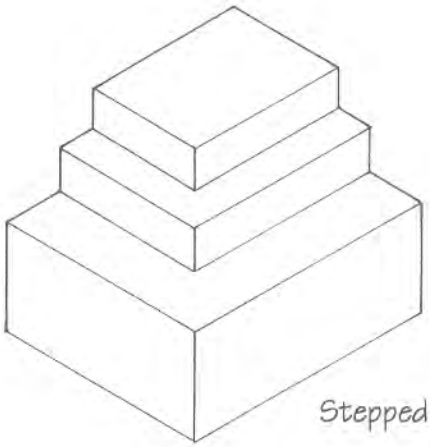
MASSING AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT

While the typical footprint of a commercial building from the turn of the twentieth century might be twenty feet wide by sixty feet long or 1200 square feet, new downtown buildings can be expected to be somewhat larger.

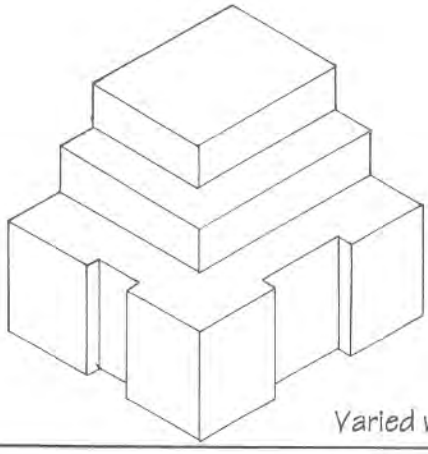
1. New infill buildings' footprints will be limited by the size of the existing lot and their massing in most cases should be simple rectangles like neighboring buildings.
2. Neighborhood transitional buildings should have small building footprints similar to nearby dwellings. If their footprint is larger, their massing should be reduced to relate to the smaller scaled forms of residential structures.
3. Institutional and multi-lot buildings by their nature will have large footprints. Therefore, the massing of these large-scale structures should be reduced so they will not overpower the traditional scale of Fairfax's historic district. Techniques could include varying the surface planes of the building, stepping back the buildings as the structure increases in height, and breaking up the roofline with different elements to create smaller compositions.



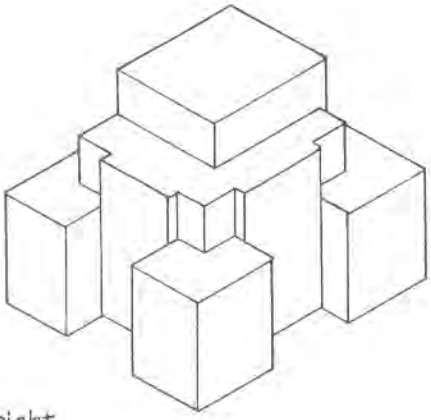
Unmodulated mass



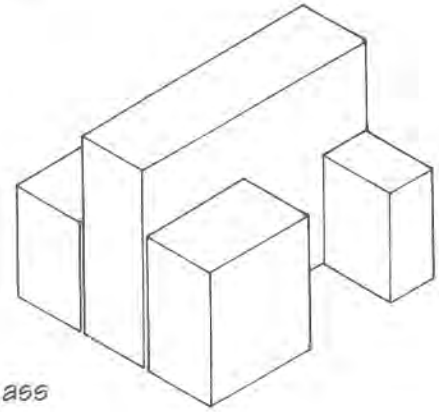
Stepped back height



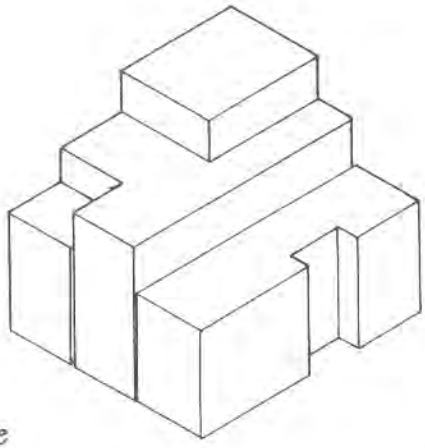
Varied wall surface



Varied height



Irregular mass



Composite

HEIGHT AND WIDTH

Because of the variety in architectural styles in the Old Town Fairfax Historic District, there is a corresponding variety in building heights of one to three stories. Building width is more consistent and ranges from twenty to forty feet.

1. The height of new construction should relate to the prevailing height of the entire block and should be 80 to 120 percent of the existing average of the block but should not exceed three stories above grade within the historic district.
2. The width of infill buildings should be similar to, and compatible with, adjacent buildings along the street.
3. Most commercial buildings in downtown average twenty to thirty feet in width. If new buildings are wider than this size, their primary facades should be divided into bays to reflect the predominant width of the existing buildings. Buildings that front on three or four sides should use this bay division technique on all appropriate facades.
4. Freestanding institutional buildings on lots other than commercial street walls may have larger proportions than the prevailing norm, but this variation should be judiciously exercised.

SCALE

Height and width create scale, or the relationship between the size of a building and the size of a person. Scale also can be defined as the relationship of the size of a building to neighboring buildings, and of a building to its site. The design features of a building can reinforce a human scale or can create a monumental scale. Most buildings in the historic district relate to the human scale and are not monumental.

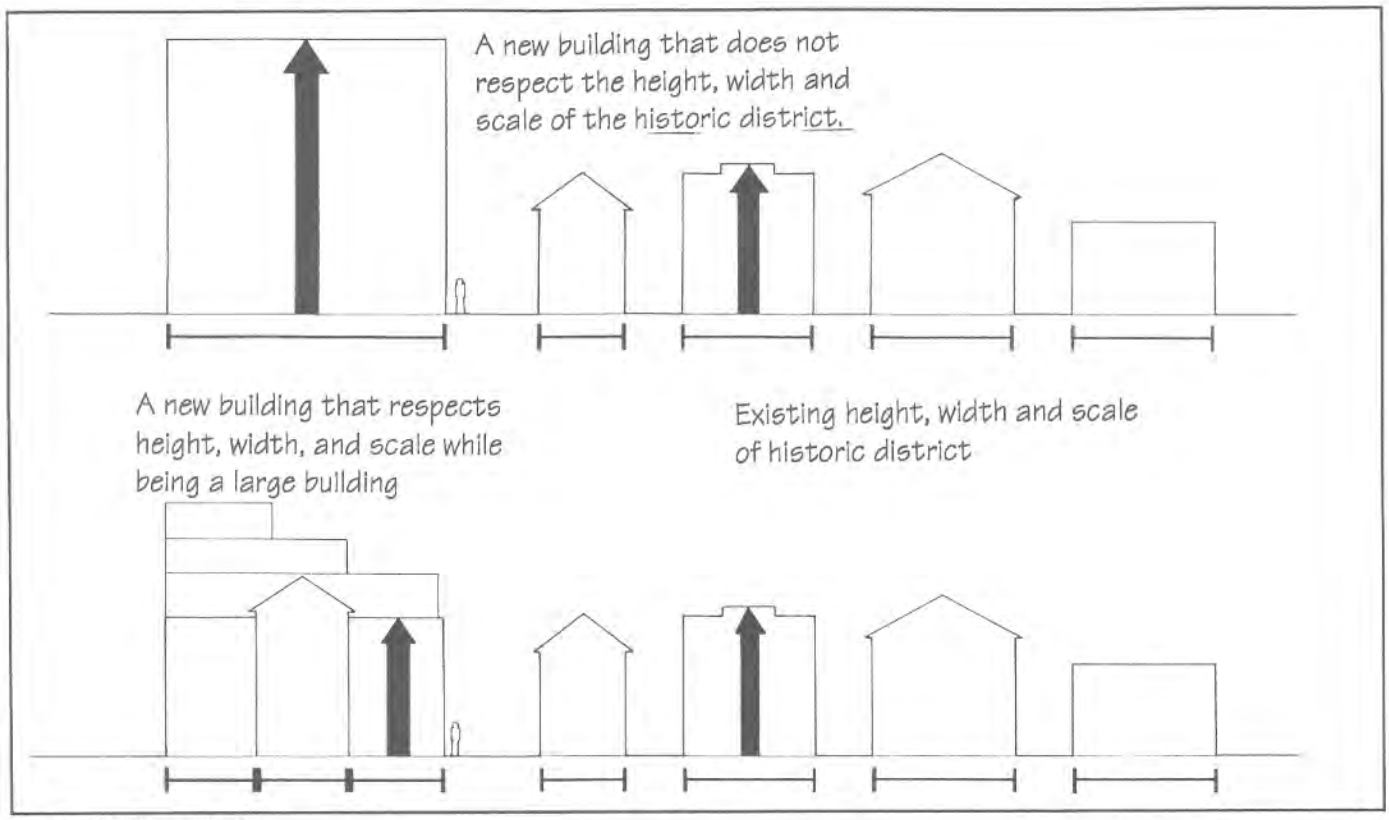
1. When the primary facade of a new commercial building is wider than forty feet, modulate it with bays.
2. Reinforce the human scale of the historic district by including elements such as porches, entrances, storefronts, and decorative features. As an exception, institutional or governmental buildings may be more appropriate on a monumental scale.

ROOF DESIGN

Roof design, materials and textures should be consistent with the existing structures in the historic district. Common roof forms include hipped, gable, flat, and shed roofs.

Common roof materials in the historic district include metal, slate, composition shingles, and wood shingles as well as rubber membranes and built-up roofs of tar and gravel.

1. The roof design of small infill commercial buildings should usually be flat or sloped behind a parapet wall.



Height, Width and Scale

2. Neighborhood transitional buildings should use roof forms that relate to the neighboring residential forms instead of the flat or sloping commercial form.

Neighborhood Transitional roof form

3. Institutional buildings that are freestanding may have a gable or hipped roof with variations.
4. Multi-lot buildings or large-scaled buildings should have a varied roof line to break up the mass of the design using gable and/or hipped forms.
5. While there are various roof forms in downtown, mansard roofs, large towers, and turrets generally have not been historic elements in Fairfax's skyline.
6. In general, the roof pitch of an older dwelling is steeper than a new tract house and this factor is more important than the type of roof in most neighborhoods. Shallow pitched roofs and flat roofs are inappropriate in historic residential areas.
7. For new construction in the historic district use traditional roofing materials such as metal or slate.
8. Avoid using thick wood cedar shakes if using wood shingles; instead use thinner more historically appropriate wood shingles or asphalt shingles which resemble wood.
9. Do not use mansard type roofs on commercial buildings; they were not used historically in Fairfax's downtown area.

Typical downtown building roof forms

10. If using composition asphalt shingles do not use light colors. Consider using darker textured type shingles that resemble slate or wood shingles.
11. Rubber membrane roofs or built-up roofs can be

used on flat or sloping roofs that are not visible from public areas.

12. If roof-mounted mechanical equipment is used, it should be screened from public view on all sides. The screening material and design should be consistent with the design, textures, materials, and colors of the building. The screening should not appear as an afterthought or addition to the building.

STOREFRONTS AND ENTRANCES

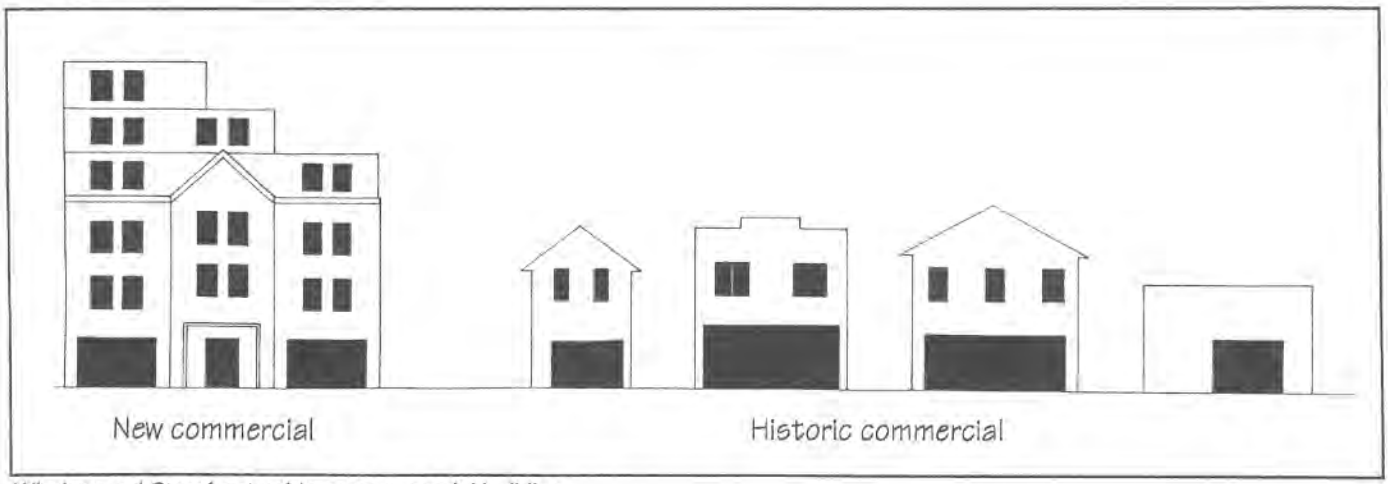
1. When designing new storefronts or elements for storefronts, conform to the configuration and materials of traditional storefronts.
2. Keep the ground levels of new retail commercial buildings at least sixty percent transparent up to a level of ten feet if possible.
3. Articulate the bays of institutional or office buildings to provide visual interest.
4. Include doors in all storefronts to reinforce street-level vitality. Discourage "mini-malls" with one central door to the interior unless individual storefronts also have usable entrances and display windows.
5. Neighborhood transitional buildings, in general, should not have transparent first floors and the design and size of their facade openings should relate more to neighboring residential structures.
6. Institutional buildings generally would not have storefronts, but their street levels should provide visual interest and display space could be integrated into the design.
7. Any parking structures facing on important downtown streets or on major pedestrian routes should contain storefronts or other forms of visual relief on the first floors of these elevations. Street level facades of commercial structures should not have blank walls; they should provide visual interest to the passing pedestrian.

DOORS AND WINDOWS

1. The rhythm, patterns, and ratio of solids (walls) and voids (windows and doors) of new buildings should relate to and be compatible with adjacent facades. The majority of existing buildings in Fairfax's historic district have a higher proportion of wall area than void area except at storefront level.

Window pattern, size, proportion and ratio of wall to window area

2. The size and proportion, or the ratio of width to height, of window and door openings of new buildings' primary facades should be similar and compatible with those on surrounding facades. The proportions of the upper floor windows of most of Fairfax's historic buildings are more vertical than horizontal. Glass storefronts would generally have more horizontal proportions than upper floor openings.
3. Traditionally designed openings generally are recessed on masonry buildings and have a raised surround on frame buildings. New construction should follow these methods in the historic district as opposed to designing openings that are flush with the rest of the wall.
4. Many entrances of Fairfax's historic buildings have special features such as transoms, sidelights, and decorative elements framing the openings. Consid-



Window and Storefront voids on commercial buildings

eration should be given to incorporating such elements in new construction.

5. Darkly tinted glass is not an appropriate material for windows in new buildings within the historic district.

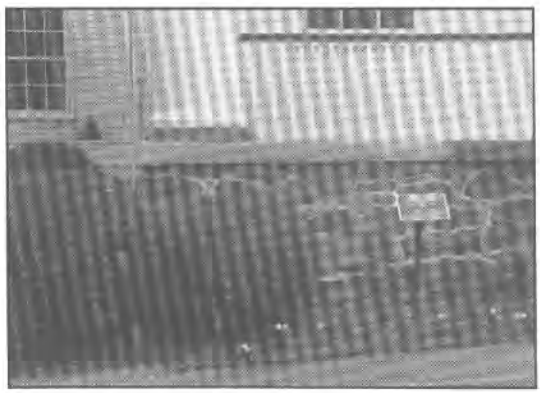
PORCHES

Many of Fairfax's historic houses have some type of porch. There is much variety in the size, location, and type of porches and this variety relates to the different residential architectural styles.

Since this feature is such a prominent part of the residential areas of the district, strong consideration should be given to including a porch in the design of any new residence in these areas.

FOUNDATIONS

The foundation forms the base of a building. On many buildings it is indistinguishable from

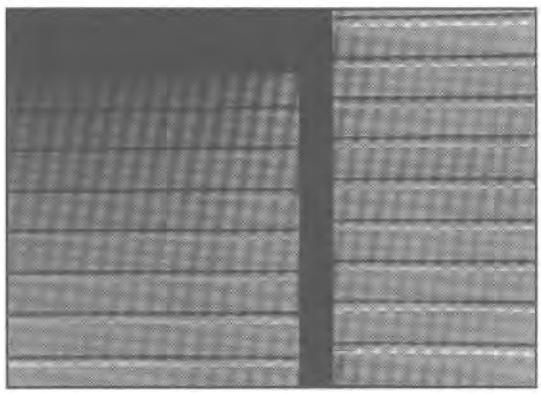


the walls of the buildings while on others it is a different material or texture or is raised well above ground level. Solid masonry foundations are common for both residential and commercial buildings. Masonry piers, most often of brick, support many porches.

Distinguish the foundation from the rest of the structure through the use of different materials, patterns, or textures. Respect the height, contrast of materials, and textures of foundations on surrounding historic buildings.

MATERIALS AND TEXTURES

1. The selection of materials and textures for a new building should be compatible with and complement neighboring buildings. In order to strengthen the traditional image of the historic district, brick and wood siding are the most appropriate materials for new buildings.



2. Large scale multi-lot buildings whose primary facades have been divided into different bays and planes to relate to existing neighboring buildings may vary materials, shades, and textures.
3. Synthetic sidings are not historic cladding materials in the historic district and their use should be avoided. For a more detailed discussion of synthetic sidings see Chapter 5.

COLOR

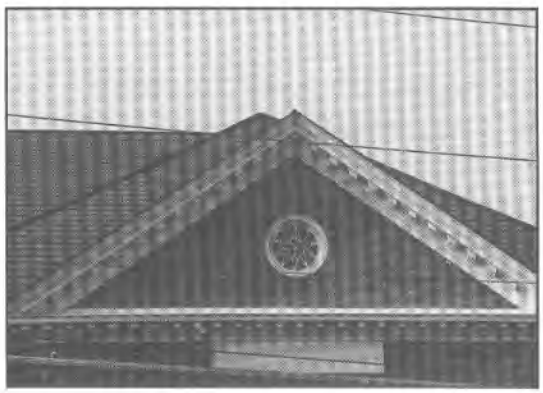
1. The selection and use of colors for a new building should be coordinated and compatible with adjacent buildings, and in Fairfax's historic district various traditional shades are appropriate. Brighter colors are more appropriate as accents on signs and awnings.
2. Placement of color is another important factor in defining a building's appearance. See Chapter 11: Guidelines for Painting for a discussion of color and color placement on historic structures.

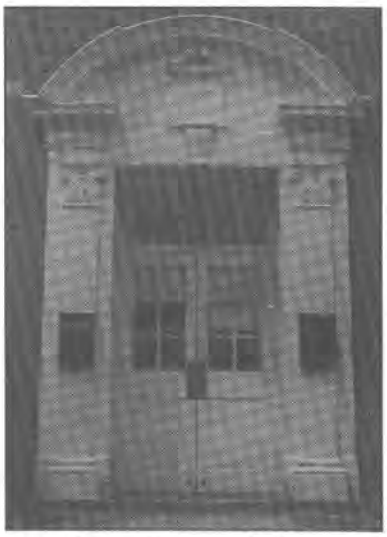
ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS/ DECORATIVE FEATURES

The details and decoration of Fairfax's historic buildings vary tremendously with the different styles, periods, and types. Such details include cornices, roof overhang, chimneys, lintels, sills, brackets, brick patterns, shutters, entrance decoration, and porch elements. The important factor to recognize is that many of the older buildings in the district have decoration and noticeable details. At the same time some of Fairfax's more recent commercial historic structures have minimal architectural decoration. Also many of the buildings were simply constructed often without the services of an architect and limited budgets precluded costly specialized building features.

It is a challenge to create new designs that use historic details successfully. One extreme is to simply copy the complete design of a historic building and the other is to "paste on" historic details on a modern unadorned design. Neither solution is adequate for the issue of designing architecture that relates to its historic context and yet still reads as a contemporary building. More successful new buildings may take their clues from historic images and reintroduce and reinterpret designs of traditional decorative elements.

1. Cornices are a common element on most of Fairfax's historic buildings from all past eras and their inclusion in new construction will help relate the new design to existing structures.





2. Chimneys are a common element on most of Fairfax's historic buildings from all past eras and their inclusion in new construction may help relate the new design to existing structures, depending on the scale of the new structure.

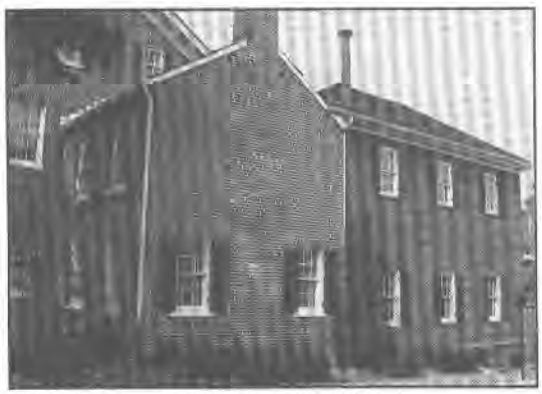
EXTERIOR LIGHTING

1. Lighting for new structures in the historic district should reflect the style and era of the proposed building.

2. Fixtures should utilize an incandescent lighting source whenever possible.
3. If a more intense light source is needed, metal halide is preferable to high pressure sodium, which casts a yellowish light or mercury vapor which casts a pale white light.
4. A combination of free-standing and wall-mounted fixtures is recommended in order to yield varied levels of lighting.

ADDITIONS

An exterior addition to a historic building may radically alter its appearance. Before an addition is planned, every effort should be made to accommodate the new use within the interior of the existing building. When an addition is necessary, it should be designed and constructed in a manner that will not detract from the character-defining features of the historic building.



Additions to 4023 Chain Bridge Road

Many of the smaller commercial buildings may be enlarged as development pressure increases in downtown Fairfax and some of the historic residences may be enlarged as the needs of new owners change. These existing structures may be increased in size by constructing new additions on the rear or side. The design of these new additions should follow the previously listed guidelines for new construction on all elevations that are prominently visible. There are several other considerations that are specific to new additions in the historic district and are listed below.

1. Function

Attempt to accommodate needed functions within the existing structure without building an addition.

2. Size

Limit the size of the addition so that it does not visually overpower the existing building.

3. Location

Attempt to locate the addition on rear or side elevations that are not visible from the street. If additional floors are constructed on top of a building, set the addition back from the main facade so that its visual impact is minimized. If the addition is located on a primary elevation facing the street or if a rear addition faces a street, parking area, or an important pedestrian route, the facade of the addition should be treated under the new construction guidelines.

4. Design

New additions should not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

5. Replication of Style

A new addition should not be an exact copy of the design of the existing historic building. If the new addition appears to be a part of the existing building, the integrity of the original historic design is compromised and the viewer is confused over what is historic and what is new. The design of new additions can be compatible with and respectful of existing buildings without being a mimicry of their original design.

6. Materials and Features

Use materials, windows, doors, architectural detailing, roofs, and colors which are compatible with historic buildings in the district.

7. Attachment to Existing Building

Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to existing buildings and structures shall be done in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building or structure would be unimpaired. Therefore, the new design should not use the same wall plane, roof line, cornice height and materials that make the addition appear original to the historic building.

7
Design Profile of the Transition District

The Old Town Fairfax Transition District was created by the City of Fairfax as a buffer area around the Old Town Fairfax Historic District to encourage a compatible mixture of residential, retail and office uses within the area in a manner which complements the scale, siting, and design of the neighboring historic district. However, since much of the transition district was developed during the period of rapid regional growth of the past thirty years, the character of the area reflects a wide variety of developments in mixture of architectural styles and forms.

The character of the transition district has various scaled projects that range from a one-story service station to a six-story office building. Major building types include: small-scaled,

free-standing, commercial structures; large-scale, multiple-storied office buildings; traditionally designed townhouse blocks for residential or office use; underutilized or vacant small older dwellings; and several small strip type commercial centers.

Roofs vary throughout the district and include many flat as well as gable and hipped types. The majority of the buildings in the transition district are clad in brick although wood, glass, and artificial panels are also present. Window arrangements are varied and range from residential scales and types to large horizontal bands of glass that define floor levels of modern large office buildings. While several of the office and commercial buildings in the transition district are designed in variations of the colonial revival styles with classical details such as porticos, cornices, and small paned windows, most of the structures have minimal decoration or stylistic features.

While some structures are sited near the sidewalk with minimal setbacks, other buildings are set back great distances on their lot. Some buildings are flanked with screened parking lots that extend the wall of the building to better define the edge of the street while many other structures are surrounded by vast expanses of asphalt parking areas with little or no landscaping or screening. Landscaping around the building entrances and along some street edges is attractive and well maintained.

Sidewalks throughout the district are brick and concrete as in the historic district.
Street lights in the transition district are cobra-heads mounted on wooden poles similar to those in the historic district while some larger-scaled projects have their own private lighting in parking lots and along building setbacks. Due to the great number of large parking lots in the transition district, there is more of a feeling of open space than in the neighboring built-up historic district although there are few pedestrian designated park areas within the transition district. Street furniture is minimal in the transition district.

The visual result of such random arrangements of buildings, parking, and open space results in a lack of a recognizable order, cohesion, or urban form that might reinforce the distinctive character of the abutting historic district.

PARKING
PAVING MATERIALS
LANDSCAPING
LIGHTING
FENCES AND WALLS
APPURTENANCES

8
Private Site Guidelines in the Transition District

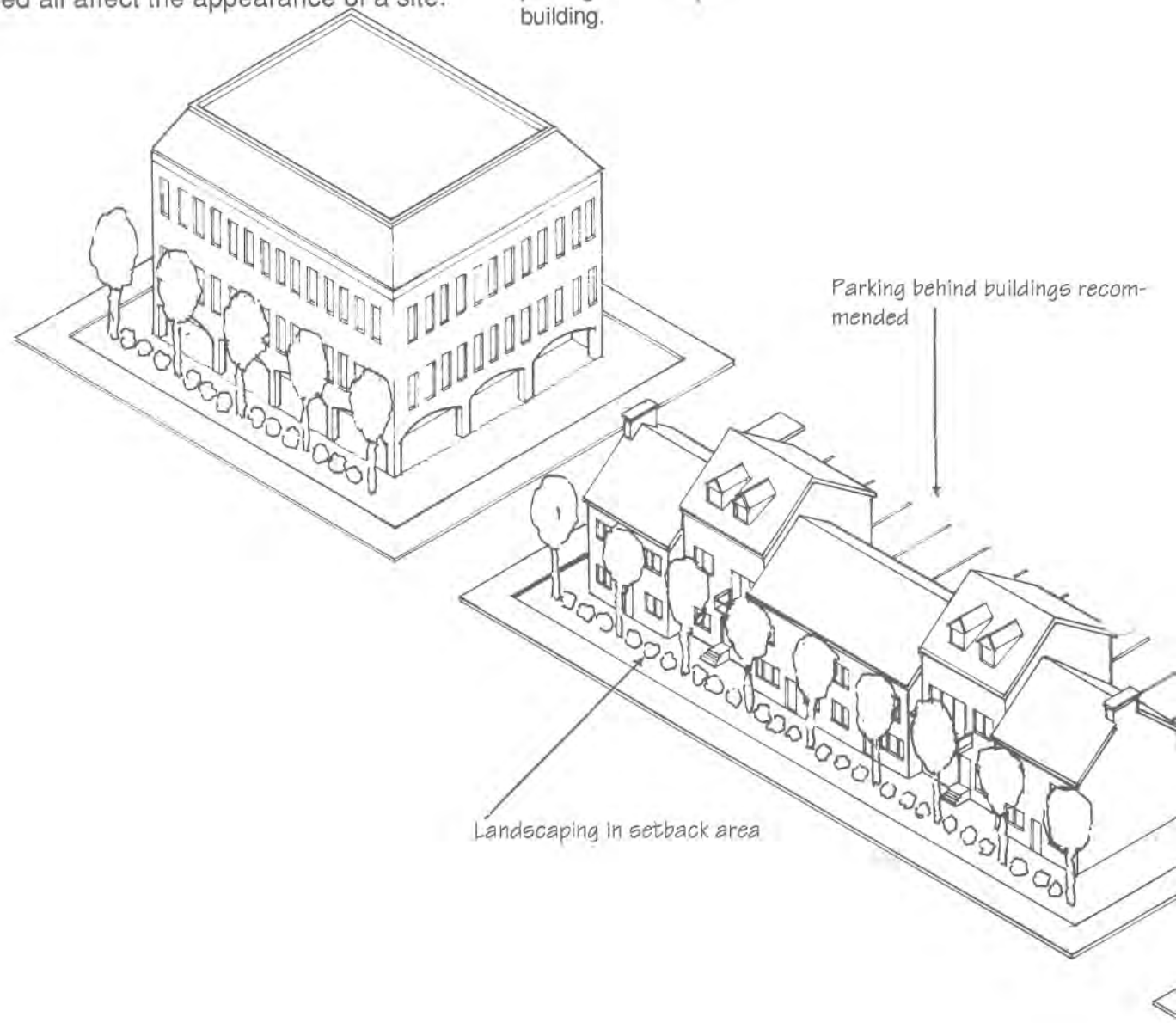
Private site features in Fairfax's Transition Overlay District can go a long way to add character and amenities and provide a more appropriate buffer and introduction to the Old Town Fairfax Historic District. Due to the wide variety in building size, scale, and placement as well as large parking areas within the transition district, site features can help bring a sense of order and attractiveness to both conditions. Elements in public ownership, such as sidewalks, streets, landscaping, and street lighting, also contribute to the character of both the transition and the historic districts. (see Chapter 7: Design Profile of the Transition District and Chapter 13: Guidelines for Public Improvements for more information)

Driveways, parking areas, plazas, terraces, fountains, walkways, garages, tool sheds,

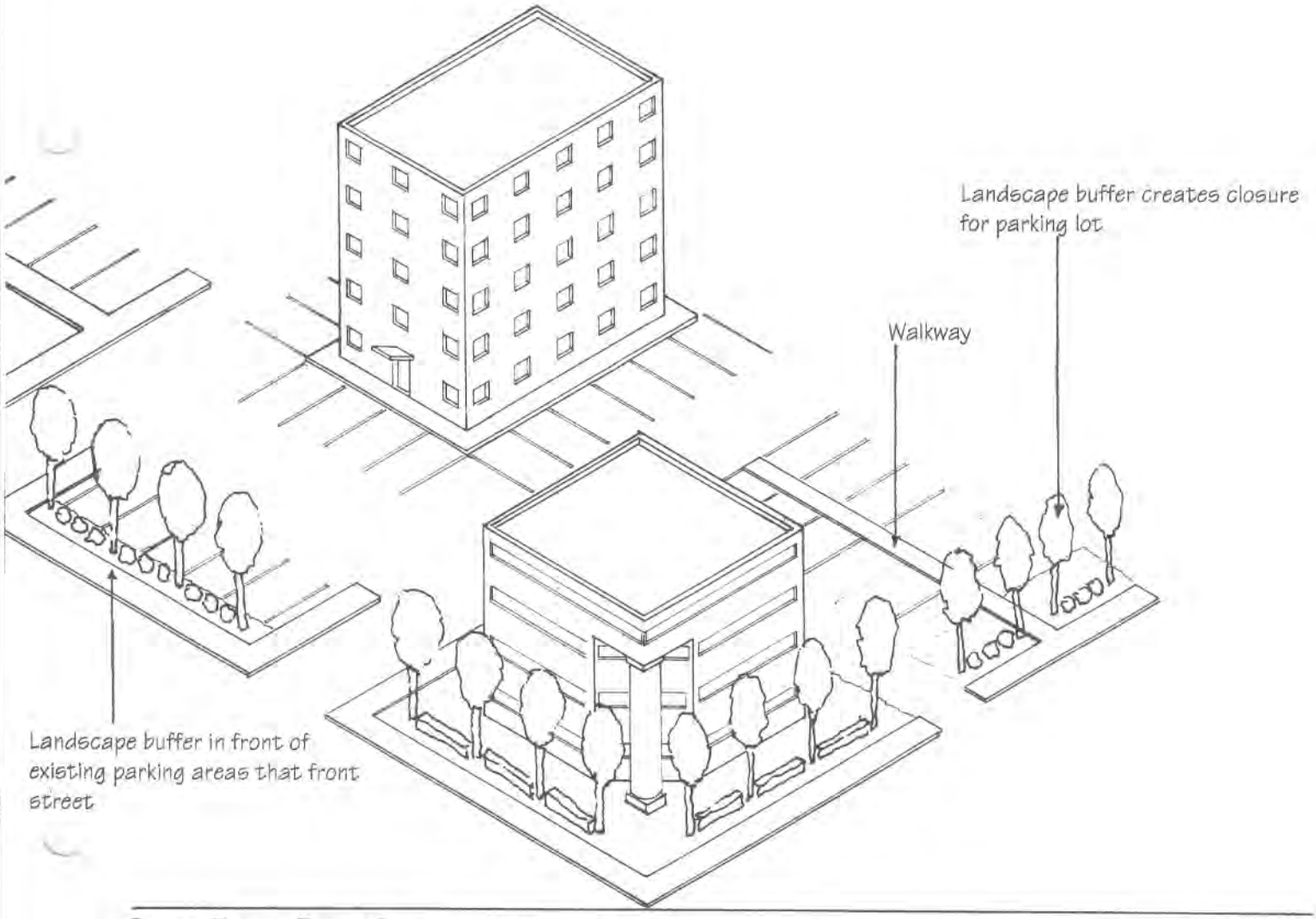
gazebos, lamp posts, fences, walls, benches, signs, fountains, drainage ditches, trees, shrubbery, flower beds, and equipment such as antennae, external heating and air conditioning units, utility meters and wires, trash container storage, solar collectors, and ramps for the handicapped all affect the appearance of a site.

PARKING

1. Limit parking in the front setback of either commercial or residential buildings.
2. Commercial buildings should generally provide parking at the rear of the building or in garages.
3. Residential buildings should have driveways with parking areas only at the sides and/or rear of the building.



4. Only one curb-cut access point per street front to private parking lots is recommended.
5. No more than ten parking spaces are recommended in a continuous row to reduce the visual impact of parking by dividing up the area into discrete islands or clusters of spaces.
6. In larger parking lots of more than twenty-five spaces separately designated and designed walkways are recommended for pedestrian safety. These walkways should be designed in contrasting materials from the asphalt paving of the lot and these walkways should be enhanced with landscaping.
7. The walkways of private sites and parking areas should be designed to relate to and reinforce the pedestrian network of sidewalks along public streets.



PAVING MATERIALS

1. Use appropriate traditional paving materials like brick, stone, and scored concrete.
2. Limit the use of asphalt for driveways and parking areas and consider the use of contrasting materials for walkways within and across them.

LANDSCAPING

1. Landscaping should be used to complement the buildings of the district and to enhance the streetscape and all landscaping must meet the requirements of the zoning code.
2. Landscaping should help complete the sense of closure along street frontages, and should be compatible with surrounding landscaping.
3. Existing trees should be maintained and protected whenever possible.
4. Use trees and plants that are traditional or indigenous to the area.
5. Avoid removing live trees or shrubs.
6. Replace diseased or dead plants, especially large trees, with like species.
7. Choose ground cover plantings that are compatible with adjacent sites, existing site conditions, and the character of the building.
8. Select mulching and edging materials carefully and do not use plastic edgings, lava, crushed rock, or other non traditional materials.
9. Landscape and screen parking areas and provide a buffer zone around all lots and within large ones.
10. Protect planting areas in parking lots from damage from vehicles.
11. Consider providing water in parking lots for planting maintenance.
12. All planted areas should be maintained in a relatively weed-free condition and free of undergrowth.
13. Landscaped seating areas, plazas, and areas of amenities such as fountains, benches, and other features are encouraged on private sites within the framework of the above guidelines.

LIGHTING

1. In residential areas, use lighting fixtures that are understated and complement the residential quality of the surroundings.
2. Avoid lights that are too bright, such as "crime" lights and bright floodlights, when surrounding lighting is subdued.
3. If a more intense light source is needed, metal halide is preferable to high pressure sodium vapor, which casts a yellowish light or mercury vapor which casts a cool white light.
4. Consider special lighting of key building features and facades.
5. Encourage merchants to leave their display window lights on in the evening to provide extra illumination at the sidewalk level.
6. Coordinate lighting in private parking lots to match public fixtures.
7. New lighting fixtures should be compatible with the design of the building, and should fit the era of the building's construction.
8. The height of freestanding lights on private sites should meet the requirements within the zoning code, and all light should be directed downward into the site.
9. A combination of free-standing and wall-mounted fixtures is recommended in order to yield varied levels of lighting.

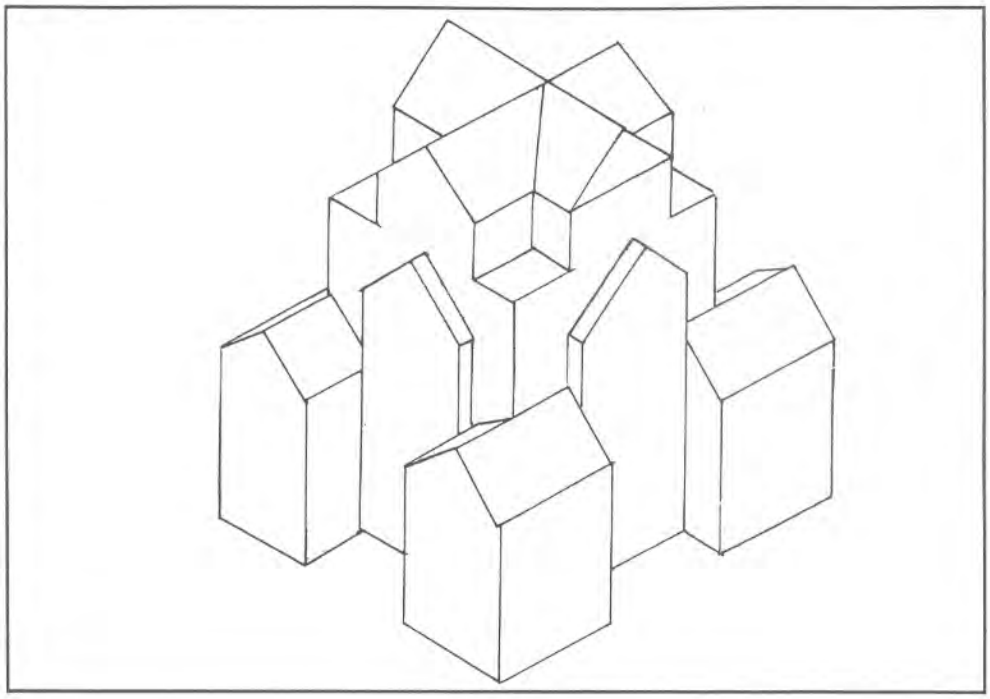
FENCES AND WALLS

1. For new fences or walls, use materials that relate to materials in the neighboring historic district and take design clues from nearby historic fences and walls.
2. Avoid using chain-link fencing, split rail fences, and concrete block walls.
3. Avoid installing street-front fences or walls; if they must be installed, keep them below four feet in height and use traditional materials and design.
4. Relate commercial privacy fences to the materials of the building. If the commercial property adjoins a neighborhood, use a brick or stone wall or wood fence or landscape screening as a buffer.

APPURTENANCES

1. Place site appurtenances, such as overhead wires, utility poles and meters, antennae, exterior heat exchangers, and trash containers, where they are least likely to detract from the character of the site and screen with landscaping or fences as necessary.
2. Encourage the installation of utility services underground on private property.
3. Place metal or wood prefabricated utility sheds in areas that are not visible from primary elevations or streets and screen them.

Building Types
Siting
Complexity of Form
Directional Expression
Massing and Footprint
Height and Width
Scale
Roof
Doors and Windows
Storefronts and Entrances
Porches
Foundations
Materials and Textures
Color
Architectural Details and Decorative Features
Cornices and Chimneys
Exterior Lighting
Additions



9 Guidelines for New Construction in the Transition District

The following guidelines offer general recommendations in the design for all new buildings in Fairfax's Transition Overlay District. The intent of these guidelines is not to be overly specific or to dictate certain designs to owners and designers. The intent is also not to encourage copying particular historic styles of the neighboring Old Town Fairfax Historic Overlay District. These guidelines are intended to provide a general design framework for new construction which in many cases will be of a larger scale than in the historic district. The challenge is to reduce the potential monolithic appearance of these larger buildings and for their design elements to relate to the distinctive character of the adjoining historic district. Equally important is the goal of adding more visual order and

extending the streetwall of the historic downtown buildings into various streets of the transition district. The result would be a denser more urban fabric that would lead one to the smaller-scaled historic core of the community.

These criteria are all important when considering whether proposed new buildings are appropriate and compatible; however, the degree of importance of each criterion varies within each area as conditions vary. For instance, breaking up the overall massing and varying the rooflines of large buildings may be more important than window proportions or architectural details. Not all criteria need to be met in every example of new construction.

New additions which have a significant visual impact can justifiably be categorized as "new construction" and should adhere to the following criteria as applicable.

SPECIAL NOTE

Besides the guidelines for new construction contained in this chapter, various articles of the City of Fairfax's Zoning Ordinance deal with new construction. These relevant sections as well as pertinent building code provisions should be thoroughly reviewed by any property owner before undertaking new construction. There are several permits and approvals depending on the particular project that must be secured from the Zoning Office before construction can begin.

BUILDING TYPES WITHIN THE TRANSITION DISTRICT

When designing new buildings in the transition district one needs to recognize that there is a great variety of building types, styles, and scales throughout the district. Due to the variety of site conditions and zoning categories within the transition district there are several types of new construction that might be constructed within the district. These building types are similar to possibilities in the historic district although their design standards will generally reflect a larger scaled structure. The design parameters of these new buildings will differ depending on the following types:

1. Infill

Infill buildings are the traditional building form that fills in holes in a larger block of buildings. This type of building generally has a limited setback, attaches to or is very close to neighboring structures, and takes many of its design cues from the adjoining buildings. The addition of these types of buildings will extend the traditional Main Street feeling into the transition district.

2. Neighborhood Transitional

Neighborhood transitional commercial buildings are located on sites that adjoin or abut residential areas. The design of these buildings should attempt to relate to the character of any adjacent neighborhood as well as to the transition district.

3. Institutional

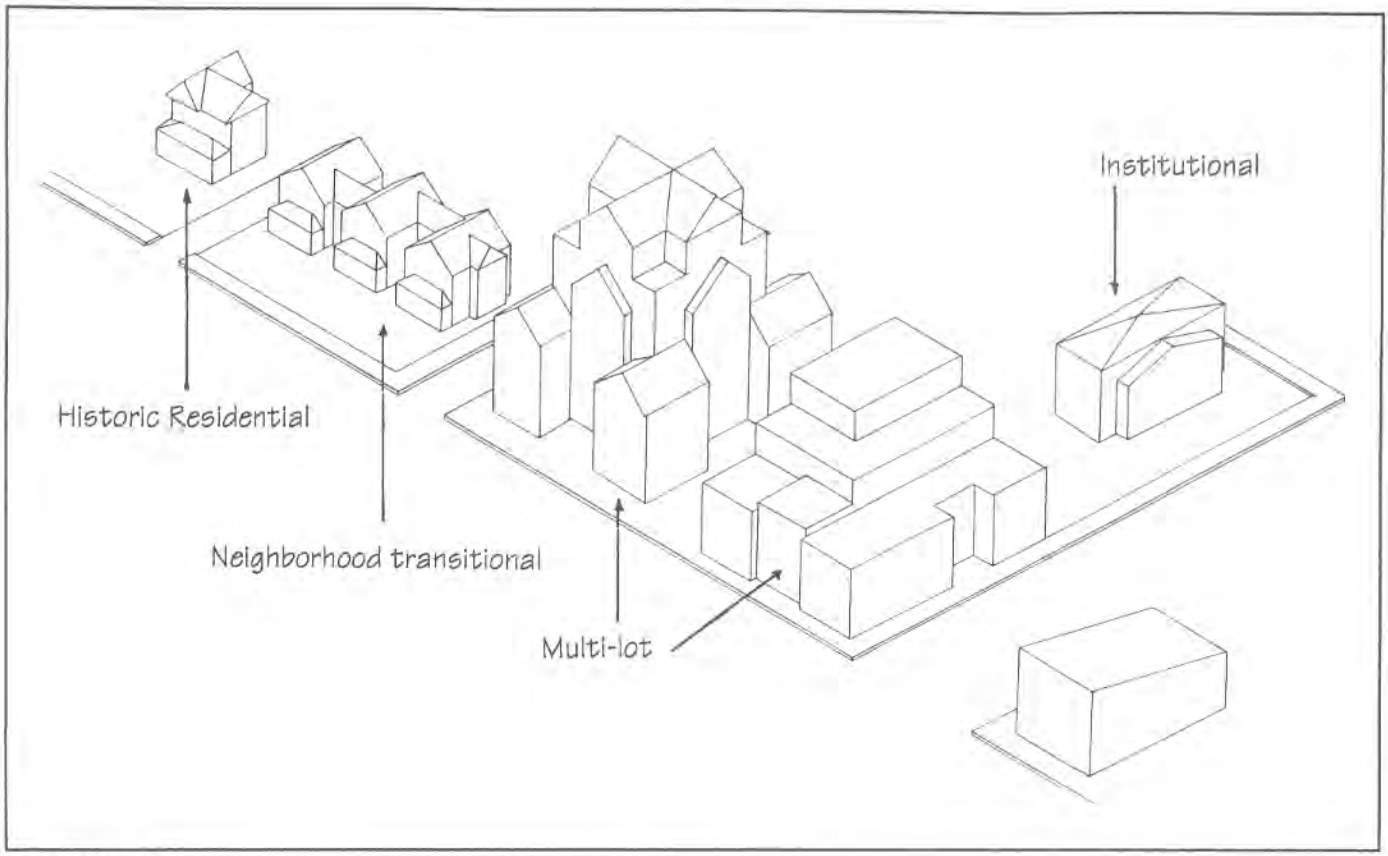
Government buildings, churches, schools, and libraries are all structures that represent a unique aspect of community life and frequently have special requirements that relate to their distinct uses. For these reasons, these buildings usually are free standing and their scale and architectural arrangements may be of a different nature than their residential and commercial neighbors.

4. Multi-lot

Often new commercial buildings will be constructed on sites much larger than the normal sized lots for traditionally designed downtown buildings in Fairfax. These assembled parcels can translate into new structures whose scale and mass could overwhelm the character of the neighboring historic district. Therefore, while this building type needs to respond to the various building conditions of the site, it also should employ design techniques to reduce its visual presence. The uses of these large buildings may be commercial, professional or residential or a mixture of any or all of these types.

5. Residential

While there is limited opportunity to construct many more residential structures, there is the possibility of new such developments within in the transition district. These designs could be townhouses or multi-family larger scaled structures that could also contain



Building Types

other uses as well. These larger buildings containing multi-family uses should be treated as a multi-lot structure in terms of their designs.

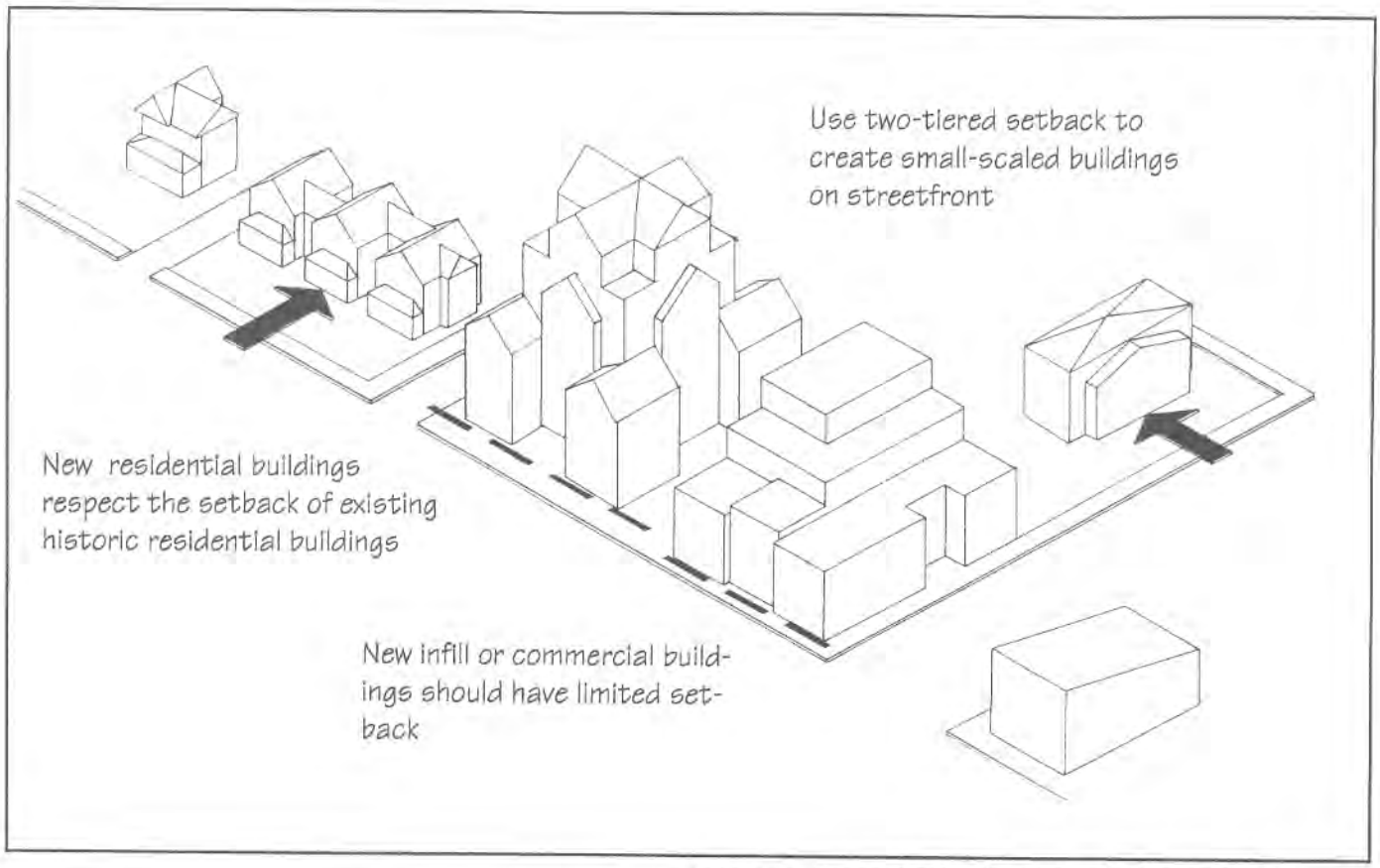
SITING

For the purposes of these guidelines, site refers not only to the area of ground that the building sits on, but also to the position of the building on the site (setback and spacing). Site also includes a variety of elements such as parking, outbuildings, landscaping, and fences which are covered in Chapter 8. Siting of new buildings and structures should be established only after the setbacks, views, and locations of surrounding buildings have been considered. Buildings and structures should be sited in such a way as to continue the closure of space provided by existing buildings in the neighboring historic district.

Front setback is the required area between the property line and the front wall of the building as further defined in the Fairfax Zoning Ordinance. See the zoning code for the detailed requirements for front yard and minimum setbacks.

Spacing between buildings depends on the size of the lot, the size of the building, and access to the lot. Consistent spacing between a row of buildings helps to establish an overall rhythm along a street and can extend the density of buildings that is found in the neighboring historic district. See the zoning code for further guidance.

1. Construct new infill or commercial buildings with a minimal setback in order to reinforce and extend the traditional street wall. The setback area should include landscaping.
2. Avoid deep setbacks on corner buildings in the transition district. Corner plazas or open spaces with amenities are an option within the transition district.
3. Keep residential setbacks the average of the setbacks of neighboring dwellings on either side of the new building(s).
4. For institutional buildings, either reinforce the street wall through a minimal setback, or use a deep setback within a landscaped area to emphasize the civic function.

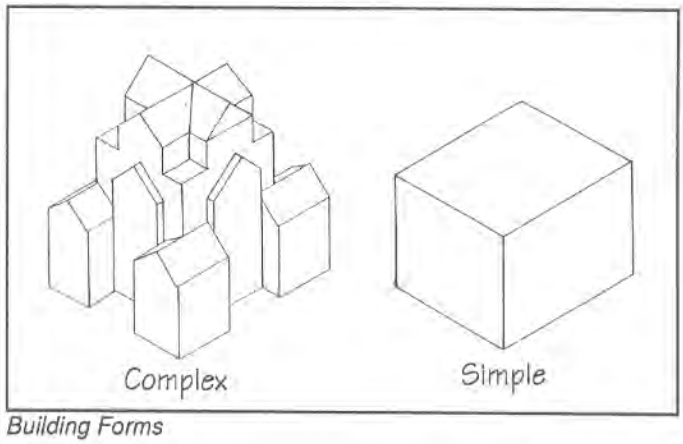


5. Consider a two-tiered setback as the building increases in height in order to create a small-scaled building along the streetfront.
6. Strengthen the existing consistency of spacing in the transition district. New townhouse residences should be attached and they should extend to the end of the block. The spacing of any individual residences should relate to the average spacing between houses on that block.
7. Commercial buildings in areas that have a well-defined street wall should have minimal spacing between them.
8. In areas that do not have consistent spacing, consider limiting spacing in order to establish an overall rhythm.
9. In areas with large multi-lot buildings, divide the facade to smaller and more traditionally scaled units.

COMPLEXITY OF BUILDING FORM

The overall form of a building relates to a combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections, and roof shapes. A building's form, or shape, can be simple (a box) or complex (a combination of many boxes used with projections or indentations). Forms may be either symmetrical where the building is the same on either side of a central axis or it may be asymmetrical where the building is different on either side of the axis.

1. Use forms in new construction that relate to those of existing neighboring buildings on the street.



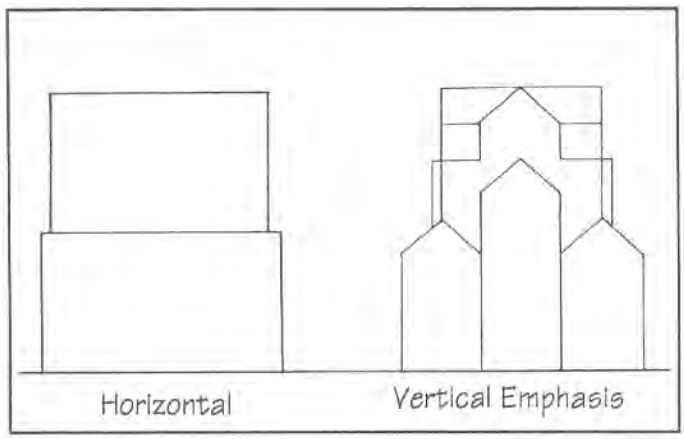
Building Forms

2. Break up large monolithic box-like designs into more complex designs.
3. Consider reducing the scale of the building at the streetfront facade and increasing the scale as the building steps back on the lot.
4. If desired, give important new civic or institutional buildings more complex forms, reflecting the complexity and/or importance of their use.

DIRECTIONAL EXPRESSION/ PROPORTION

This guideline addresses the relationship of height and width of the front elevation of a building mass. A building is horizontal, vertical, or square in its proportions and direction expression.

Respect the vertical directional expression of



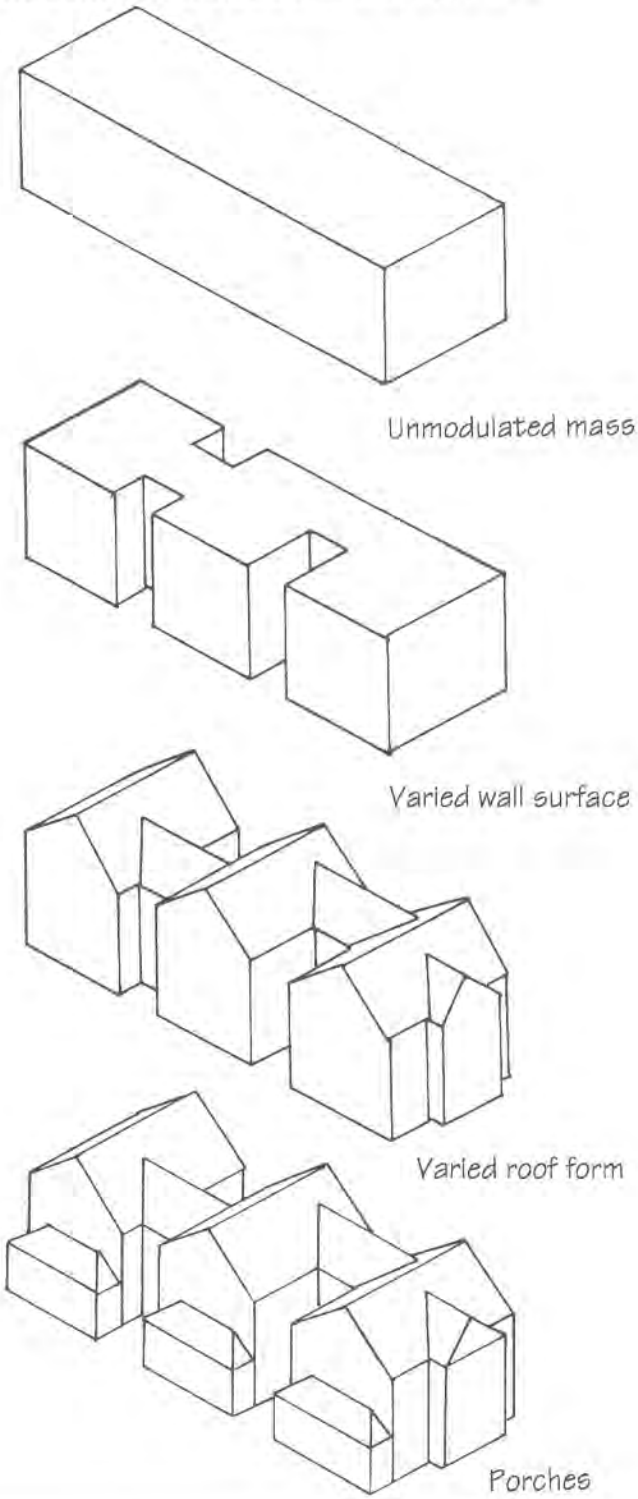
Directional Expression

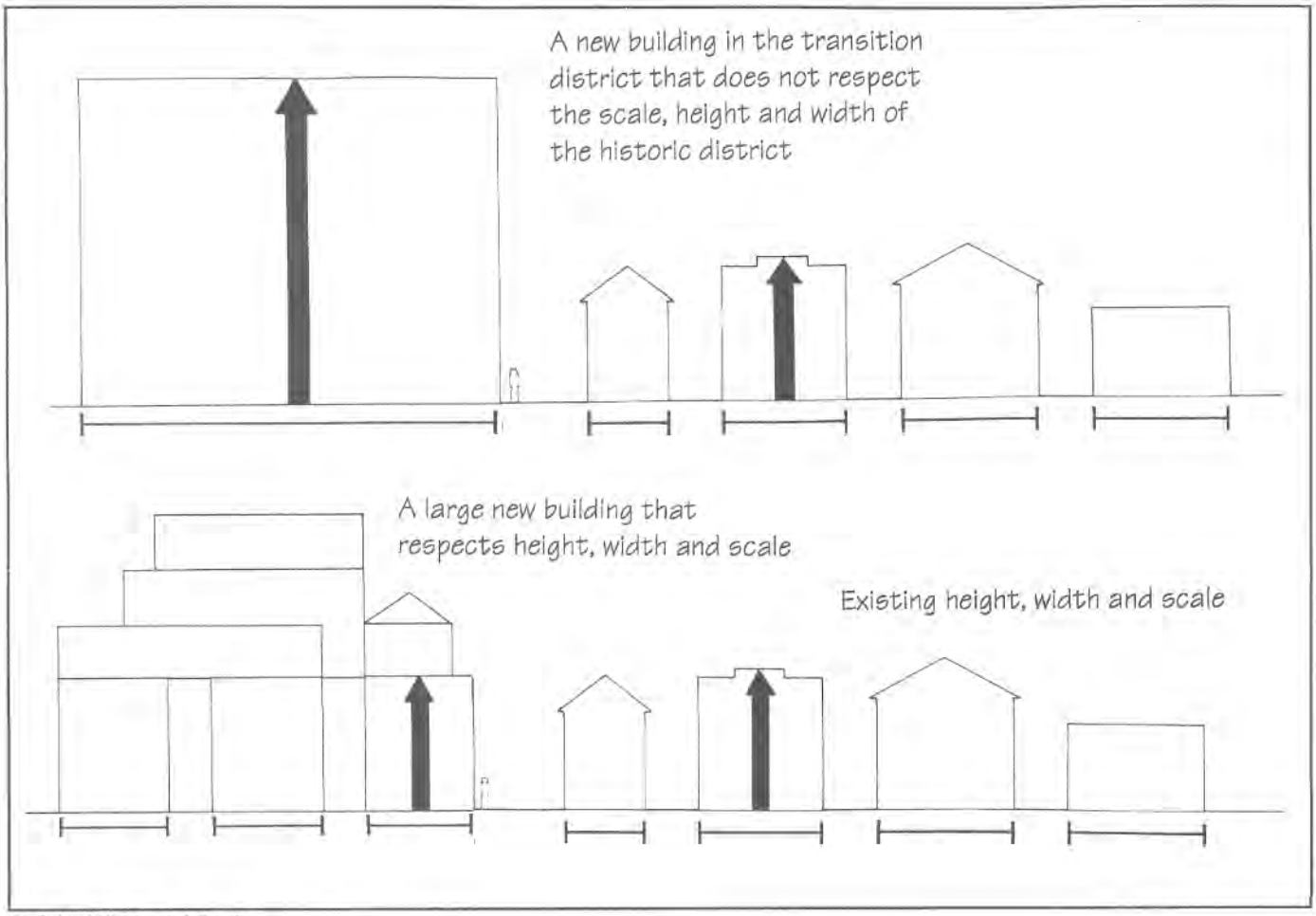
most of the older commercial buildings in the neighboring historic district and the townhouse designs of residential development. Divide the facades of horizontal buildings into articulated bays to create more vertical elements.

MASSING AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT

While the typical footprint of a commercial building from the turn of the twentieth century might be twenty to thirty feet wide by sixty to eighty feet long, new transition district commercial buildings can be expected to be larger in most instances.

1. New infill buildings' footprints will be limited by the size of the existing lot and their massing in most cases should be simple rectangles like neighboring historic buildings.
2. Neighborhood transitional buildings should have small building footprints similar to nearby dwellings. If their footprint is larger, their massing should be reduced to relate to the smaller-scaled forms of residential structures.
3. Institutional and multi-lot buildings by their nature will have large footprints. Therefore, the massing of these large-scale structures should be reduced so they will not overpower the traditional scale of the neighboring historic district. Techniques could include varying the surface planes of the building, stepping back the buildings as the structure increases in height, and breaking up the roofline with different elements to create smaller compositions.





Height, Width and Scale

HEIGHT AND WIDTH

Because of the variety in building types and periods in Fairfax's transition district, there is a corresponding variety in building heights of one to five stories and widths.

1. The height of new construction should relate to the prevailing height of the entire block and should reinforce the traditional Main Street wall of buildings two to three stories high along the edge of the front of the lot.
2. In order to reinforce the traditional Main Street wall of two to three stories of the neighboring historic district, consider stepping back the upper floor levels of larger multi-lot structures in the transition district.
3. Most historic commercial buildings in downtown are twenty to thirty feet wide. If new buildings are wider than this size, their primary facades should be divided into bays to reflect the predominant width of the existing buildings. Buildings that front on three or four sides should use this bay division technique on all appropriate facades.
4. Freestanding institutional buildings on lots other than commercial street walls may have larger proportions than the prevailing norm, but this variation should be judiciously exercised.

SCALE

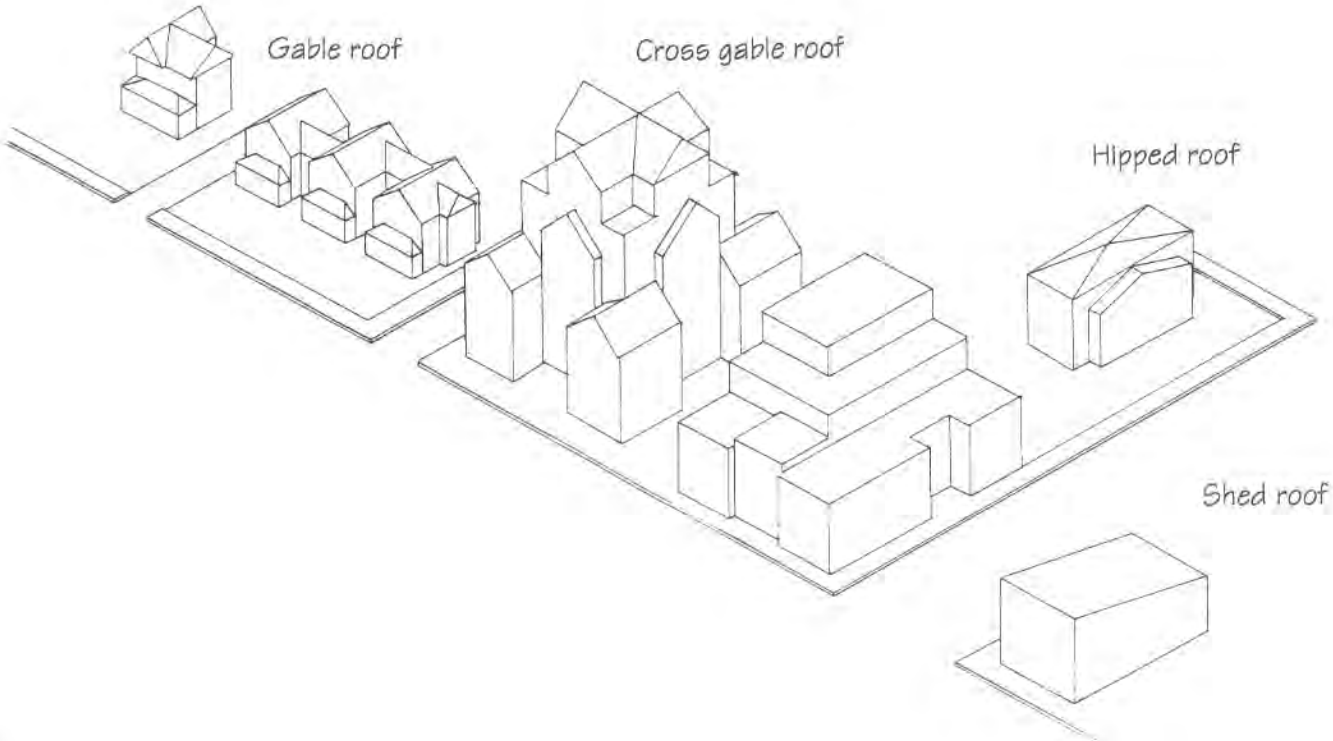
Height and width create scale, or the relationship between the size of a building and the size of a person. Scale also can be defined as the relationship of the size of a building to neighboring buildings, and of a building to its site. The design features of a building can reinforce a human scale or can create a monumental scale. Most buildings in the historic district relate to the human scale and are not monumental while a number of the office buildings in the transition district are much larger and more monumental in their scale.

1. When the primary facade of a new commercial building in the transition district is wider than forty feet, modulate it with bays with different planes, materials, or designs.
2. Reinforce the human scale of the historic district in the transition district by including elements such as porches, entrances, storefronts, and decorative features. As an exception, institutional or governmental buildings may be more appropriate on a monumental scale.

ROOF

Although roof areas of new buildings within the transition district will be large, their design, materials and textures should be consistent with the existing structures in the neighboring historic district. Common roof forms include hipped roofs, gable roofs, flat roofs, and shed roofs. Common roof materials in the transition district include metal, composition shingles, rubber membrane and built-up roofs of tar and gravel.

1. The roof design of new smaller-scaled infill commercial buildings should usually be flat or sloped behind a parapet wall.
2. Neighborhood transitional buildings should use roof forms that relate to the neighboring residential forms instead of the flat or sloping commercial form.
3. Institutional buildings that are freestanding may have a gable or hipped roof with variations.
4. Multi-lot buildings that are large scaled should have a varied roof line to break up the mass of the design using gable and/or hipped forms.
5. While mansard roofs, large towers, and turrets generally have not been historic elements in Fairfax's skyline, there is the possibility of adding more architectural interest to the transition district with such features.
6. In general, the roof pitch of an older dwelling is steeper than a new tract house and this factor is more important than the type of roof in most neighborhoods. Shallow pitched roofs and flat roofs are inappropriate in residential areas.
7. For new construction in the transition district use any of the above listed roofing materials.
8. If using composition asphalt shingles do not use light colors. Consider using darker textured type shingles that resemble slate or wood shingles.
9. If roof-mounted mechanical equipment is used, it should be screened from public view on all sides. The screening material and design should be consistent with the design, textures, materials, and colors of the building. The screening should not appear as an afterthought or addition to the building.

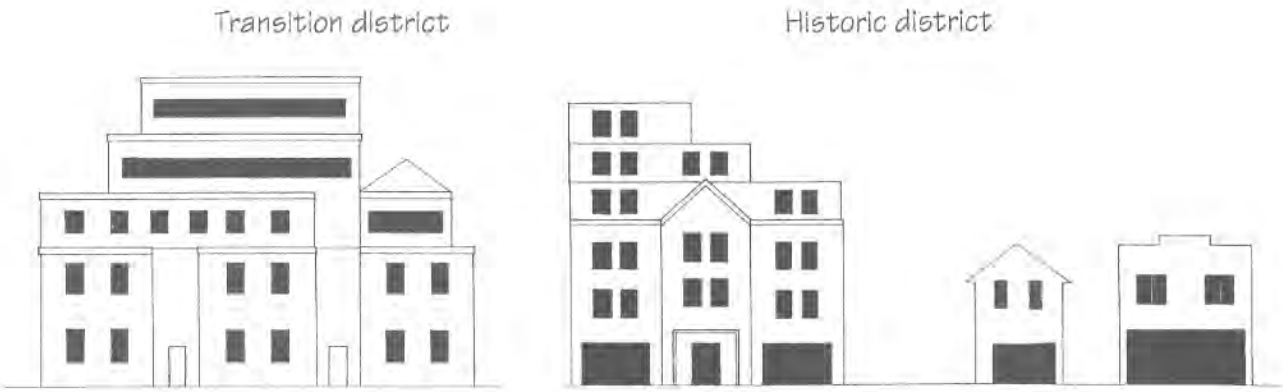


DOORS AND WINDOWS

1. The rhythm, patterns, and ratio of solids (walls) and voids (windows and doors) of new buildings should relate to and be compatible with neighboring facades. While the majority of existing buildings in the neighboring historic district have a higher proportion of wall area than void area except at storefront level, new construction in the transition district can have a higher ratio of voids that relates to contemporary curtain wall construction if desired.
2. The size and proportion, or the ratio of width to height, of window and door openings of new buildings' primary facades should be similar and compatible with those on surrounding facades. While the proportions of the upper floor windows of most of Fairfax's historic buildings are more vertical than horizontal, these proportions can vary more within the transition district. Glass storefronts would generally have more horizontal proportions than upper floor openings, although the total area of storefront openings in the transition district may be smaller than traditional storefronts.
3. Traditionally designed openings generally are recessed on masonry buildings and have a raised surround on frame buildings. New construction in the transition district may follow these designs or may have openings that are flush with the rest of the wall.
4. Many entrances of neighboring historic buildings have special features such as transoms, sidelights, and decorative elements framing the openings. Consideration should be given to incorporating similar elements in new construction in the transition district depending on the overall design.

STOREFRONTS AND ENTRANCES

1. When designing new storefronts or elements for storefronts, consider conforming to the general configuration of traditional storefronts.
2. Keep the ground levels of new retail commercial buildings at least fifty percent transparent up to a level of ten feet.
3. Articulate the bays of institutional or office buildings to provide visual interest.
4. Include doors in all storefronts to reinforce street-level vitality. Discourage "mini-malls" with one central door to the interior unless individual storefronts also have usable entrances and display windows.
5. Neighborhood transitional buildings in general should not have transparent first floors and the design and size of their facade openings should relate more to neighboring residential structures.
6. Institutional buildings generally would not have storefronts, but their street levels should provide visual interest and display space could be integrated into the design.
7. Any parking structures facing on important downtown streets or on major pedestrian routes should consider storefronts or other forms of visual relief on the first floors of these elevations. Street level facades of commercial structures should not have blank walls; they should provide visual interest to the passing pedestrian.



Window, door and storefront voids

PORCHES

Many of Fairfax's historic houses have some type of porch. There is much variety in the size, location, and type of porches and this variety relates to the different residential architectural styles. Since this feature is such a prominent part of the residential areas of the district, strong consideration should be given to including a porch in the design of any new residence(s) in the transition district.

FOUNDATIONS

The foundation forms the base of a building. On many buildings it is indistinguishable from the walls of the buildings while on others it is a different material or texture or is raised well above ground level. Solid masonry foundations are common for both residential and commercial buildings. Masonry piers, most often of brick, support porches.

1. If possible, distinguish the foundation from the rest of the structure through the use of different materials, patterns, or textures and create a base on which the building rests. Consider the height, contrast of materials, and textures of foundations on neighboring buildings.
2. On large institutional or multi-lot structures, scale the foundation or building base to the scale of the facade or individual major facade elements.

MATERIALS AND TEXTURES

1. The selection of materials and textures for a new building should be compatible with and complement neighboring buildings. In order to strengthen the traditional image of the neighboring historic district, brick and wood siding are the most appropriate materials for new buildings. Brick is the most appropriate material for commercial and office buildings.
2. Large scale multi-lot buildings whose primary facades have been divided into different bays and planes to relate to existing neighboring buildings may vary materials, shades, and textures.
3. Synthetic sidings are not traditional cladding materials in the historic district and their use should be avoided in the transition district. For a more detailed discussion of synthetic sidings see Chapter 5.

COLOR

1. The selection and use of colors for a new building in the transition district should respect and be compatible with colors of neighboring buildings. Brighter colors are generally more appropriate as accents on signs and awnings.
2. Placement of color is another important factor in defining a building's appearance. See Chapter 11 for a discussion of color placement on structures.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS/DECORATIVE FEATURES

While many of the existing larger buildings within the transition district have minimal details or decorative features, changes in architectural tastes have resulted in a new interest in and use of such features on commercial and office buildings throughout the country. The important factor to recognize is that the many of the older buildings in the historic district have decoration and noticeable details. The use of such features can reduce the visual blandness of much new construction of the transition district while providing elements that relate to the neighboring historic district.

Nevertheless, it is a challenge to create new designs that use historic details successfully. One extreme is to simply copy the complete design of a historic building and the other is to "paste on" historic details on a modern unadorned design. Neither solution is adequate for the issue of designing architecture that relates to its historic context and yet still reads as a contemporary building. More successful new buildings may take their clues from historic images and reintroduce and reinterpret designs of traditional decorative elements.

CORNICES AND CHIMNEYS

Cornices and chimneys are common elements on most of Fairfax's historic buildings from all past eras and their inclusion in new construc-

tion in the transition district may help relate the new design to existing structures if they are incorporated in a sensitive manner and fit the new building properly.

EXTERIOR LIGHTING

1. Lighting for new structures in the transition district should reflect the style of the proposed building.
2. Fixtures should utilize an incandescent lighting source whenever possible.
3. If a more intense light source is needed, metal halide is preferable to high pressure sodium, which casts a yellowish light or mercury vapor which casts a pale white light.
4. A combination of free-standing and wall-mounted fixtures is recommended in order to yield varied levels of lighting.

ADDITIONS

There is a large amount of open space within the transition district and therefore there is the opportunity for adding on to many existing buildings. However, some of the larger office buildings have continuous rows of exterior offices with windows on all sides of the building and would not lend themselves easily to additions.

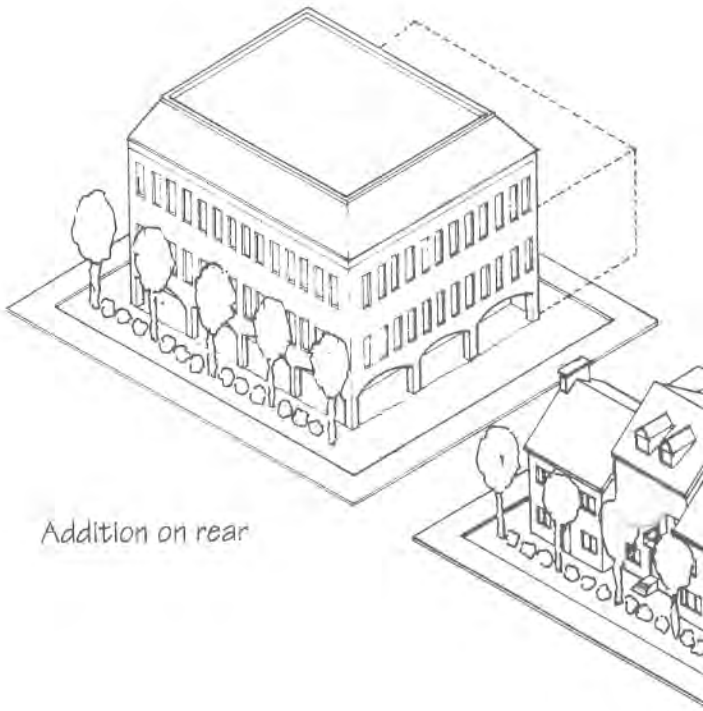
Existing structures may be increased in size by constructing new additions on the rear, side or in some cases the front of the building if it is deeply setback on the lot. The design of these new additions should follow the previously listed guidelines for new construction on all elevations that are prominently visible. There are several other considerations that are specific to new additions in the transition district and are listed below.

1. Size

Limit the size of the addition so that it does not visually overpower the existing building unless the new addition relates better to the historic character of the neighboring district than does the existing building.

2. Location

Attempt to locate the addition on rear or side elevations that are not visible from the street. If additional floors are constructed on top of a building, set the addition back from the main facade so that its visual impact is minimized. If the addition is located on a primary elevation facing the street or if a rear addition faces a street, parking area, or an important pedestrian route, the facade of the addition should be treated under the new construction guidelines.



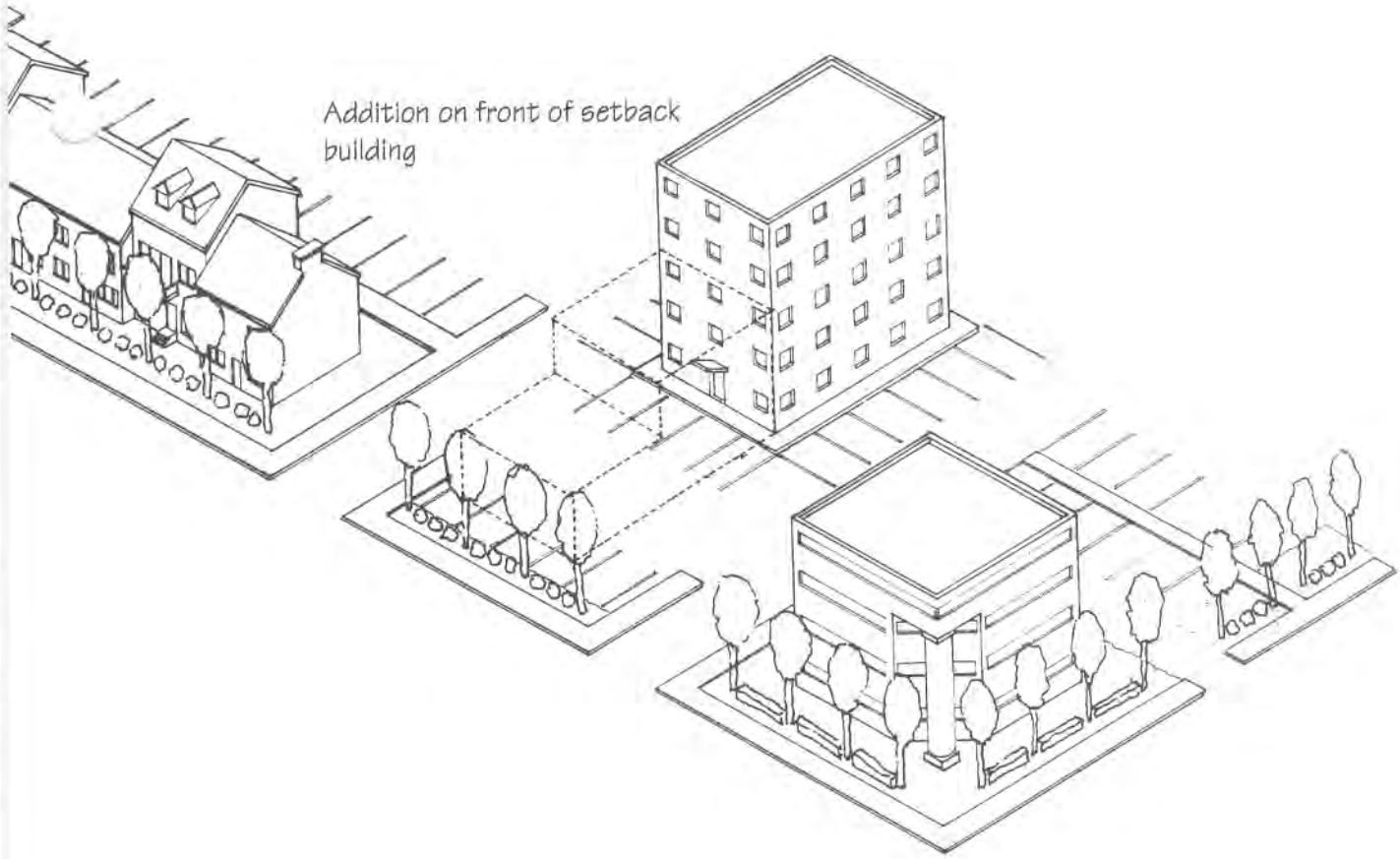
Addition on rear

3. Design

The new work should generally be differentiated from the existing building but should be compatible with its massing, size, scale, and architectural features. A new addition in the transition district should not be an exact copy of the design of a historic building but can still relate to the overall character of the neighboring historic district.

4. Materials and Features

Use materials, windows, doors, architectural detailing, roofs, and colors which are compatible with the existing building.



10
Guidelines for Signs

Signs are a vital and a necessary part of the downtown scene. A balance should be struck between the need to call attention to individual businesses and the need for a positive image for both the historic and the transition districts. The City of Fairfax has a detailed sign ordinance including specific regulations for the Old Town Fairfax Historic District. See the zoning code for further details.

GENERAL SIGN GUIDELINES: HISTORIC DISTRICT

Signs in the historic district should be a part of the architectural composition of the building. They should complement the scale, color, and

architectural features of the building. Signs should be oriented to pedestrian rather than to vehicular traffic.

1. Placement

Place signs so that they do not obstruct architectural elements and details that define the design of the building and respect the signs of adjacent businesses.

2. Number and Size

The number of signs used should be limited to encourage compatibility with the building and discourage visual clutter. See the zoning code for further details.

3. Execution

Signs should be executed by sign professionals who are skilled at lettering and surface preparation. All signs should be simple, visible, legible and direct. Mixed upper and lower case letters are easily read and serif letters are eye-catching. No single lettering style is preferred. Lettering should be limited to two styles per building.

4. Design

Many signs are not readable or simply do not convey an image appropriate for the business or the building. Often, sign painters or graphic designers can and should assist with sign design.

5. Shape

Shape of signs for commercial buildings can conform to the area where the sign is to be located. Likewise, a projecting sign may take on the shape of the product or service provided such as a shoe for a shoe store.

6. Materials

Use traditional sign materials such as wood, glass, gold leaf, raised individual metal or painted wood letters, and painted or vinyl letters on wood, metal, or glass. Wall signs should not be painted directly on the surface of the wall. Window signs should be painted or have decal flat letters and should not be three dimensional.

7. Color

Use colors that complement the materials and color scheme of the building, including accent and trim colors. A limit of three colors is recommended for signs, although more colors may be appropriate in exceptional and tastefully executed designs.

8. Illumination

Generally, signs should be indirectly lit with a shielded incandescent light source. Back-lit plastic signs are not recommended for the historic district.

9. Buildings with Multiple Tenants

A master sign plan should be submitted for the building to include a directory sign that is coordinated with any other individual signs. Each business on the main level should have the same limits for total area computed as a portion of the individual building frontage.

SIGN TYPES : HISTORIC DISTRICT

(See zoning code for detailed regulations)

Free-standing signs, building mounted signs, sandwich signs and banners are allowed in the historic district. Rooftop signs, portable signs (other than sandwich signs) and marquee signs are not allowed.

1. Free-Standing Signs

a. A **hanging sign** is one suspended from braces, beams, or other supports connected to a pole implanted upright in the ground. Hanging signs should be compatible with the size of the building facade.

b. **Ground-mounted signs** should be placed in a manner that will not obstruct motorists' view from the surrounding streets or driveways. These signs are more appropriate for new developments within the historic district.

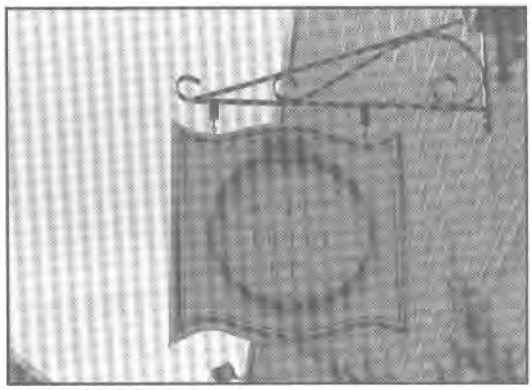
c. **Post top signs** are inconsistent with the character of the district and should not be used.

2. Building Mounted Signs

a. **Wall signs** for commercial buildings can be located above the storefront, within the frieze of the cornice, on covered transoms, or on the pier that frames display windows or generally on flat, unadorned surfaces of the facade or in areas

Wall mounted sign

clearly designed as sign locations. For residential buildings, flat signs attached to the wall at the first floor or between porch columns is appropriate.


Projecting sign

b. A **projecting sign** is one which is attached perpendicular to the wall of a building, and it should be sized to be compatible with the facade. There should be sufficient height for clearance for pedestrians but the sign should generally not be higher than the window sill of the second story. Projecting signs should be hung at ninety degrees to the face of the building. For residential buildings, small projecting signs attached to the wall at the first floor or porch column are appropriate and should not be located higher than the top of the porch.

c. **Window signs** are those attached to the inside or outside face of a window and are generally painted letters or decals. Window signs should be approximately at eye height for good pedestrian visibility. Optional locations could include near the top or bottom of the display window glass. Window signs are also appropriate on upper floor windows and the glazing of doors.

Window sign

d. **Awning and canopy signs** should generally be placed on the valance area only. Letters may be painted, screened or sewn on the fabric.

3. Sandwich Signs

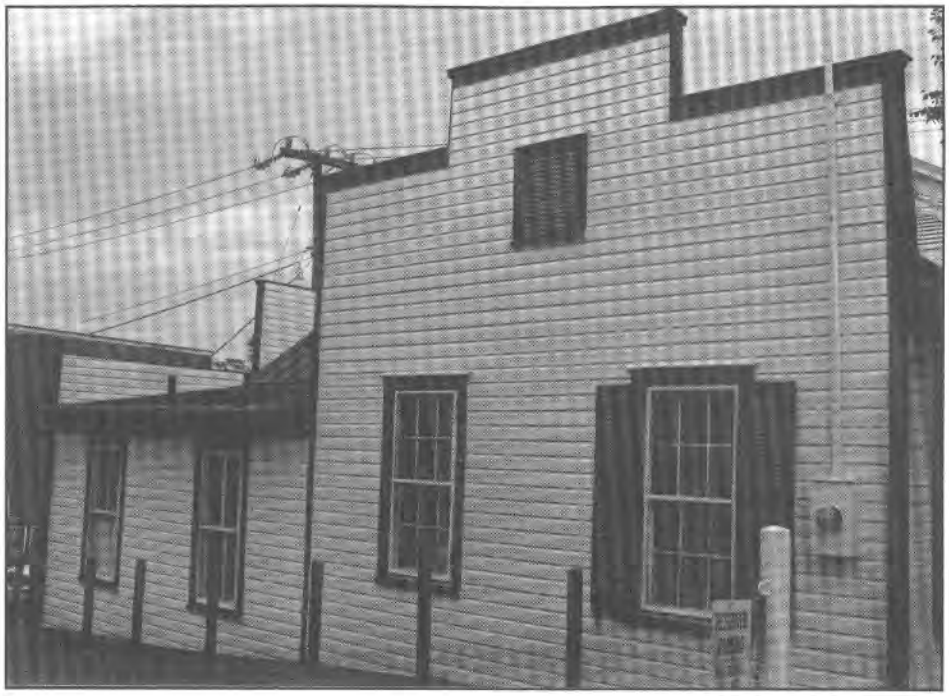
A sandwich board is a portable sign which is constructed of durable materials and which has two flat faces, with or without changeable copy. It is designed to be displayed on the ground but it is only allowed where it will not inhibit pedestrian circulation.

SIGN GUIDELINES: TRANSITION DISTRICT

(See zoning code for detailed regulations)

The goal of the transition district is to respect and reinforce the distinctive character of the neighboring historic district. While some of the developments can be expected to be larger scale in the transition district, the sign requirements should attempt to generally reflect the sign character of the historic district.

1. Back-lit wall mounted linear signs within the transition district should have dark backgrounds with light letters.
2. Neon signs can add variety and color to the transition district if carefully designed and placed. They should be limited to one per business and limited to the name and/or logo of the business.
3. No free-standing time-and-temperature signs are recommended.



11
Guidelines for Painting

A properly painted building accentuates its character-defining details. Painting is the least expensive way to maintain historic fabric and make a building an attractive addition to a historic district. Many times however, buildings are painted inappropriate colors or colors are placed incorrectly. Some paint schemes use too many colors but more typical is a monochromatic approach in which one color is used for the entire building. These guidelines are for the historic and the transition district.

1. Remove loose and peeling paint down to the next sound layer, using the gentlest means possible: hand scraping and hand sanding (wood and masonry) and wire brushes (metal). A heat gun can be used on wood for heavy build up of paint. Never use an open flame. Do not use sandblasting or high-pressure water wash to remove paint from masonry, soft

metal, or wood. Take precautions when removing older paint layers since they may contain lead.

2. Insure that all surfaces are free of dirt, grease, and grime before painting.
3. Prime surfaces if bare material is exposed or if changing types of paints, such as from from oil-based to latex. Use primers formulated for the material to be painted, for instance metal primers for metal and oil-based primer for wood.
4. Do not apply latex paint directly over oil-based paint as it may not bond properly and can pull off the old oil-based paint.
5. Use a high-quality paint and follow manufacturer's specifications for preparation and application.
6. Do not paint masonry that is unpainted.
7. Choose colors that blend with and complement the overall color schemes on the street. Do not use bright and obtrusive colors.
8. For the majority of buildings, the numbers of colors should be limited to three. It is best to treat similar elements and surfaces with the same color to achieve a unified, instead of an overly busy and disjointed appearance.

   For **commercial buildings**, trim, including cornices, storefront, and window framing should be painted the same color. The wall, if painted, should be a contrasting color. The window sash and doors can be painted a different accent color than the walls and trim. If the cornice or storefront is particularly ornate, the wall color can be introduced back into the trim as an accent for raised panels and trim or a second accent color that is a shade of the trim can be used.

   Likewise, the number of colors for **residential buildings** should be limited to three also. One color for the wall, a contrasting color for the trim and an accent color for sash, doors and shutters. The accent color may also be used for the roof. An additional color for the foundation may be introduced. If the building is particularly ornate and has many different wall materials, additional colors can be introduced. See below.
9. The choice of colors can differ according to architectural style:

   Federal and Colonial Revival: Softer colors should be used on these buildings since the style is a return to classical motifs.

   Victorian and Queen Anne: Deep, rich colors or more neutral natural colors can be used on the exterior trim and walls of late Victorian-era houses. The important objective is to highlight the different textures of these decorated structures. Shingles can be treated with a different color or shade from the color of the siding on the same building.

   Vernacular: These buildings are generally very simple designs with plain detailing. One color should be used for the trim and a contrasting color for the wall.

12
Guidelines for Awnings

Awnings can contribute to the overall image of downtown by providing visual continuity for an entire block, helping to highlight specific buildings, and covering any unattractively remodeled transom areas above storefronts. They also protect pedestrians from the weather, shield window displays from sunlight and conserve energy. Awnings are appropriate within the historic and the transition districts.

AWNING TYPES

Standard Sloped Fabric

Whether fixed or retractable, sloped awnings are the traditional awning type and are appropriate for most historic buildings, both residential and commercial. Sloped awnings may used on new buildings as well.

Boxed or Curved Fabric

More current design treatments, these types of awning are best used on a non-historic or new commercial buildings.

Canopies and Marquees

Appropriate on some commercial buildings, canopies and marquees should fit the storefront design and not obscure important elements such as transoms or decorative glass.

Aluminum or Plastic

Seldom are these awnings appropriate for historic buildings but they can be used in the transition district if they are compatible with new construction and if they are plastic coated and appear close to a traditional fabric awning.

AWNING GUIDELINES

Awning Design and Placement

1. Place awnings carefully within the storefront, porch, door, or window openings so they do not obscure elements or damage materials.
2. Choose designs that do not interfere with existing signs or distinctive architectural features of the building, or with street trees or other elements along the street.
3. Choose an awning shape that fits the opening in which it is installed.
4. Make sure the bottom of the awning valance meets code requirements.

Awning Fabric and Color

1. Coordinate colors with the overall building color scheme. Solid colors, wide stripes, and narrow stripes may be appropriate, but not overly bright or complex patterns.
2. Avoid using shiny plastic-like fabrics.
3. Avoid using metal, hard plastic, or overly ornate fabric awnings.

Signs on Awnings

1. As appropriate, use the front panel or valance of an awning for a sign. Letters can be sewn, screened, or painted on the awning fabric; avoid hand-painted or individually made fabric letters that are not professionally applied.
2. See the zoning code for size and placement requirements for awning signs.

Fences and Walls
Landscaping
Lighting
Parking Facilitites
Parking Lots
Parks and Open Spaces
Pedestrian Sidewalks and Curbs
Public Signs
Street Furniture
Streets
Traffic and PedestrianSignals
Utilities

13 Guidelines for Public Improvements

The following guidelines apply to both the historic and transition districts in order to better coordinate the overall appearance of both areas, with certain exceptions that are noted.

FENCES AND WALLS

1. The design of any fences and walls in public areas should be of traditional design and materials to complement the character of the historic district.
2. Recommended materials are brick, stone, or landscaping for walls and traditionally designed metal or wood pickets for fences.
3. Avoid chain link or split rail fences within the districts. Solid board fences or evergreen landscaping may be used to screen transformers or other equipment.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping should be used to complement the proposed structure and to enhance the streetscape. Landscaping should help complete the sense of closure along street frontages, and should be compatible with surrounding landscaping.

1. Maintain existing landscaping.
2. Replace damaged or missing street trees with like species.
3. Protect plantings from pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
4. Select hardy plant species that require minimal maintenance.
5. Screen surface parking areas with mature plantings and trees.
6. Use plantings and trees to soften the visual effects of the interior of large parking lots.
7. Remove and store sidewalk planters in the winter months if they are empty.
8. If street trees are to be planted in the public right-of-way, they should continue the existing pattern set by the city.
9. Place street trees so that they do not block views of storefronts.
10. Do not demolish buildings to provide open areas for plantings.
11. Use landscaping as recommended in the Community Appearance Plan to develop distinctive entryways into the districts.

LIGHTING

1. Expand the use of pedestrian-scaled light fixtures throughout the district replacing the current wooden light poles with a traditional designed metal pole as specified in the Community Appearance Plan.
2. Insure that adequate lighting is provided at critical areas of pedestrian/vehicular conflict such as parking lots, alleys, and crosswalks.
3. Coordinate lighting in private parking lots to insure their compatibility with the city's fixtures if possible.
4. Encourage merchants and building owners to leave their display window lights on in the evening to provide increased light levels and visual interest.
5. Consider lighting important facades, steeples, and domes to provide focal points for the district in evening hours.
6. Provide outlets on light standards for seasonal lighting and brackets for hanging banners and decorations for special events.
7. Keep to a minimum the number of styles of light fixtures and light sources used in the district.

PARKING FACILITIES

1. Do not demolish existing historic buildings to provide space for new parking garage construction.
2. Consider existing parking lots or other open space for parking garage sites.
3. For new parking garages, follow new construction guidelines to insure compatibility with existing buildings.
4. Consider including retail storefronts in the first-floor levels of garages to reinforce street-level vitality.

PARKING LOTS

1. Avoid demolishing buildings that contribute to the historic character of the district for parking lots.
2. Avoid constructing parking lots that do not reinforce the existing street wall of buildings and the grid system of rectangular blocks.
3. Screen parking lots from streets and sidewalks with trees and landscaping.

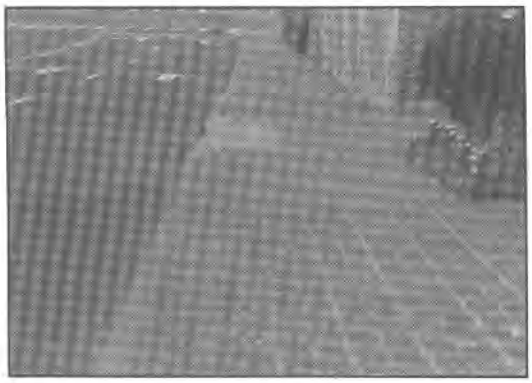
4. Landscape the interior of large parking lots to provide shade and visual relief from large expanses of asphalt.
5. Protect planting areas in parking lots from damage by vehicles.
6. Provide water in parking lots for planting maintenance.
7. Provide adequate lighting to provide security in evening hours.
8. Designate special parking areas within the lots for motorcycles and bicycles.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

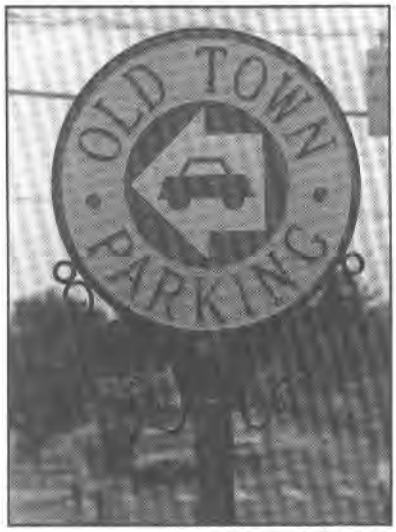
1. Continue to implement the open space system recommendations suggested in the Community Appearance Plan.
2. Do not demolish historic buildings to provide open spaces for parks.
3. Design any open space areas to reinforce the streetwall as appropriate.

PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALKS AND CURBS

1. Repair or replace sidewalks and curbs as needed, using materials that match adjacent materials in design, color, texture, and tooling.
2. Continue using brick pavers already in use for repaving existing or extending new sidewalks.



3. Remove obstacles from the sidewalk such as obsolete signs, poles, and parking meter standards.
4. Avoid excessive curb cuts for vehicular access across pedestrian ways; where curb cuts are necessary, mark them with a change in materials, color, texture, or grade.
5. Avoid blocking the sidewalk with too many street furniture elements.



PUBLIC SIGNS

1. Select a new distinctive design for local public signs and use this design on street, parking, and other public signs in the districts. Attach the street signs to new traffic light or sign poles that match historic light fixture poles. Consider consolidating public signs, as appropriate.
2. Place entry signs directing visitors to the historic district on major highways and streets leading to the downtown.
3. Expand the placement of signs to parking lots at the entrances to the downtown.
4. Consider creating a series of historic signs commemorating significant events, buildings, and individuals in Fairfax's history and place them throughout the district. Consolidate public signs as appropriate.
5. Avoid placing sign posts in locations where they can interfere with the opening of vehicle doors.

STREET FURNITURE

1. Continue using the existing design for trash containers in the districts and place them at public open spaces, near benches, at each bus stop, and at other important pedestrian locations.
2. Expand the use of metal and wood benches at key locations in the districts such as at all bus stops and shelters, the courthouse lawn, and other public open space areas. Paint the benches to match colors used on other street elements in the district.
3. Attempt to make street furniture such as newspaper boxes, telephone booths, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, planters, and bollards compatible in design, color, and materials.
4. Avoid placing too many elements on narrow sidewalks.
5. Refer to the Community Appearance Plan for more detailed guidance on street furniture.

STREETS

1. Make street paving consistent throughout the districts.
2. Consider using brick-lined crosswalks at key intersections as has already been done.
3. Avoid widening the existing streets, as this would make it more difficult for pedestrians to use the downtown area.
4. Avoid the cosmetic patching of surfaces when more substantial repair work is needed.
5. Maintain the existing layout and historical grid of the area.

TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS

1. Replace the existing span wire traffic signals with mast arm signals. Decorative poles should be compatible with the any new pedestrian-scaled light fixtures.
2. Install pedestrian signals as needed.

UTILITIES

1. Place utilities underground if at all possible.
2. Screen surface equipment with fences or evergreen landscaping.
3. Place necessary utilities such as transformers and overhead wires so that they are as visually unobtrusive as possible.

14
Guidelines for Moving or Demolishing a Building

Historic buildings are irreplaceable community assets and once they are gone, they are gone forever. With each succeeding move or demolition, the integrity of the district is further eroded. The new building or the parking lot that often replaces the demolished or moved historic building is seldom an attribute to the historic character of the district. Therefore, the moving or demolition of any contributing building in a historic district should be very carefully considered before approval is given.

No structure within the historic district shall be moved or demolished except in accordance with a permit approved by the BAR. See the Zoning Code for further guidance.

GUIDELINES FOR BUILDINGS TO BE MOVED

1. Obtain a building permit.
2. Contact the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for assistance prior to moving the building if it is to remain listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.
3. Seek assistance on documenting the building on its original site before undertaking the move. Take adequate photography of the building and the site and also consider measuring the building if the move will require substantial reconstruction.
4. Conduct a professional assessment of the present structural condition of the building in order to minimize any damage that might occur during the move.
5. Select a contractor who has prior experience in moving buildings and check references with other building owners who have used this contractor.
6. Adequately secure the building from vandalism and potential weather damage before and after its move.

Additional Criteria to Consider When Moving Buildings

1. Will the proposed relocation have a detrimental effect on the structural soundness of the building or structure? The technical aspects of moving older buildings can be very complicated and it is easy to seriously damage a historic building in the moving process. Original building material may have to be replaced or altered in the subsequent rehabilitation.
2. Will the proposed relocation affect other historic buildings or other sites located within the historic district? Often the removal of a structure will leave a large unsightly gap in the street and a parking lot or a replacement building will not relate visually to the historic buildings remaining on the street. Also the building in question may be part of a block or district of buildings that collectively derive their historical significance from similar associations and moving one structure may compromise the significance of the remaining buildings.
3. Will the proposed relocation provide new surroundings that would be compatible with the architectural aspects of the building or structure? Often the building's original site (topography, building setback, location and type of outbuildings, and the type and nature of landscaping) plays a large role in defining the building's appearance and in determining its architectural significance. The character of the new site may be very different, and possibly inappropriate, from the original site. In addition, other buildings on the new street may be of different architectural periods and styles and the moved building might be out of place on its new site.
4. Is the proposed relocation the only practicable means of saving the structure from demolition? Building owners should seriously study any alternatives to moving a historic building. Often the existing building can be incorporated into a new development or a new addition can be added to it to make it more functional for its owner.
5. Is the building or structure going to be relocated to another site within the historic district or to another adjacent site which is subject to preservation control. If the historic building is relocated to an area that is not subject to architectural review, it could face increased threats to its integrity.

GUIDELINES FOR BUILDINGS TO BE DEMOLISHED

1. Obtain a building permit.
2. Document the building thoroughly through photographs and measured drawings according to Historic American Building Survey Standards. This information should be retained in the City's Community Development and Planning Department as well as with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.
3. If the site is to remain vacant for any length of time, improve the empty lot in a manner consistent with other open space in the historic district.

Additional Criteria to Consider When Demolishing Buildings

1. Why is the building being demolished and are there any alternatives to demolition?
2. Is the building or structure structurally unsound and to what extent?
3. Would a relocation of the building or structure or a portion thereof, be to any extent practicable as a preferable alternative to demolition?
4. Will the proposed demolition potentially adversely affect other historic buildings located within the historic district, or adversely affect the character of the historic district?
5. If a building is damaged by a fire or other natural hazard, the Building Inspector shall determine if the building is structurally sound or is in imminent danger to public safety and should be demolished.
6. Has a professional economic and structural feasibility study for rehabilitating or reusing the structure been completed and do its findings support the proposed demolition?

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NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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The National Main Street Center
The National Trust for Historic Preservation
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Certified Local Government Officer
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Downtown Fairfax Coalition
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Fairfax Museum and Visitors Center
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Zoning Office
City Hall, Rm. 102
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Glossary

ADDITION
To add a new part such as a wing, ell, or porch to an existing building or structure.

ALTERATION
To make a visible change to the exterior of a building or structure.

ARCH
A curved or pointed opening in a wall, usually masonry, supported on either end by piers or pillars and spanning a passageway or open area.

BALUSTRADE
A railing or parapet supported by a row of short pillars or balusters.

BARGEBOARD
The decorative board along the roof edge of a gable concealing the rafters.

BAY
A part of a structure defined by vertical divisions such as adjacent columns or piers.

BAY WINDOW
Fenestration projecting from an exterior wall surface and often forming a recess in the interior space.

BOLLARD
A short post usually made of metal that is set at intervals to keep auto traffic from a particular outdoor space or area.

BRACKET
A wooden or stone decorative support beneath a projecting floor, window, or cornice.

BULKHEAD
In commercial buildings the structural supporting wall under the display windows of a storefront. Bulkheads are often paneled and are usually constructed of wood.

CLASSICAL
Pertaining to the architecture of Greece and Rome, or to the styles inspired by this architecture.

COLUMN
A vertical support, usually supporting a member above.

COPING
The top course of a wall which covers and protects the wall from the effects of weather.

CORBELING
Courses of masonry that project out in a series of steps from the wall. In commercial architecture the corbeling is usually brick and is part of the cornice at the top of the facade.

CORNICE
The upper, projecting part of a classical entablature or a decorative treatment of the eaves of a roof.

CRESTING
A decorative ridge for a roof, usually constructed of ornamental metal.

CUPOLA
A small dome rising above a roof.

DORMER
A small window with its own roof projecting from a sloping roof.

FACADE
The front face or elevation of a building.

FANLIGHT
A semicircular window with radiating muntins, located above a door.

FINIAL
An ornament at the top of a gable or spire.

GABLE
The triangular portion of the end of a wall under a pitched roof.

GABLE ROOF
A pitched roof form where two flat roof surfaces join at a straight ridge, forming gables at both ends.

GLAZING
Another term for glass or other transparent material used in windows.

HIPPED ROOF
A roof with slopes on all four, instead of two, sides.

INFILL BUILDING
A new structure built in a block or row of existing buildings.

LINTEL
A horizontal beam over an opening carrying the weight of the wall.

MANSARD
A roof form of two slopes on all four sides, the lower slope being longer and at a steeper pitch than the upper.

MARQUEE
A fixed metal and glass canopy over the entrance of a building.

MEMBRANE ROOF
A roof covering consisting of a single ply of rubber.

MODILLION
A block or bracket in the cornice of the classical entablature.

MUNTIN
A glazing bar that separates panes of glass.

OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICT
A set of legal regulations that are imposed on properties in a particular area or district that are additional requirements to the existing zoning regulations in effect for those properties.

PARAPET
A low wall that rises above a roof line, terrace, or porch and may be decorated.

PATINA
The appearance of a material's surface that has aged and weathered. It often refers to the green film that forms on copper and bronze.

PEDIMENT
The triangular gable end of a roof, especially as seen in classical architecture such as Greek temples.

PIER
An upright structure of masonry serving as a principal support.

PILASTER
A pier attached to a wall with a shallow depth and sometimes treated as a classical column with a base, shaft, and capital.

PITCH
The degree of slope of a roof.

PORTICO
An entrance porch often supported by columns and sometimes topped by a pedimented roof; can be open or partially enclosed.

PRESERVATION
To sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of a building or structure and the existing form and vegetation of a site.

REHABILITATION
To return a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features which are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values.

REMODEL
To alter a structure in a way that may or may not be sensitive to the preservation of its significant architectural forms and features.

RENOVATION
See REHABILITATION

RESTORATION
To accurately recover the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of later work and/or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

RETROFIT
To furnish a building with new parts or equipment not available at the time of original construction.

REVEAL
The depth of wall thickness between its outer face and a window or door set in an opening.

RISING DAMP
A condition in which moisture from the ground rises into the walls of a building.

SASH
The movable part of a window holding the glass.

SETBACK
The distance that a building is placed from the front edge of its lot.

SILL
The horizontal water-shedding member at the bottom of a door or window.

SIX-OVER-SIX DOUBLE HUNG SASH
A type of window with six lights (or windowpanes) each in an upper and a lower sash that move up and down in vertical grooves one in front of the other.

STABILIZATION
To re-establish a weather resistant enclosure and the structural stability of an unsafe or deteriorated property while maintaining the essential form as it exists at present.

TERRA COTTA
Glazed or unglazed clay that has been cast and fired and is used as decorative elements on surfaces and around openings of buildings.

TRANSOM
In commercial buildings it is the area of windows in the storefront above the display windows and above the door. It is usually filled with prism glass to allow diffused light to enter the interior of the building.

VALANCE
In commercial buildings it is the edge or border area of an awning where a sign may be placed.

VERNACULAR
Indigenous architecture that generally is not designed by an architect and may be characteristic of a particular area. Many of Herndon's simpler buildings that were constructed in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century are forms found throughout the county but are considered vernacular because they do not exhibit enough characteristics to exemplify a particular architectural style.