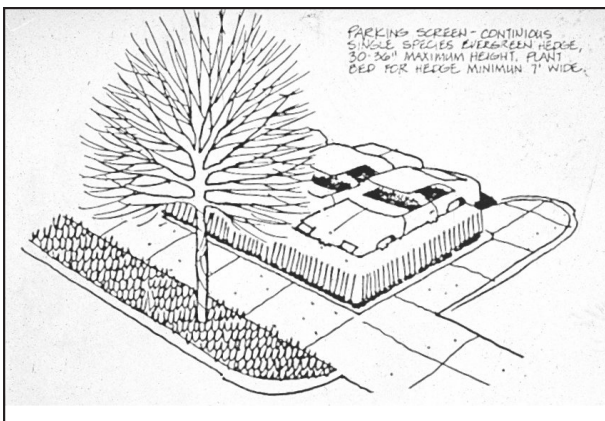




*Commercial buildings in the CBD should form a continuous street “wall.”*



*The photo above shows a 30” hedge used to screen a parking area from the sidewalk.*



*This drawing shows a 30-36” hedge used to screen a parking area from the sidewalk.*

## 4.0 Guidelines for New Commercial/Civic Buildings in the Central Business District

### 4.1 CBD Defined

The Central Business District presents the highest “downtown” image of the community. It includes the red areas shown on the map on page 3.

### 4.2 Allowed Uses

Uses allowed in the CBD include commercial, residential, institutional, office, and service. Gas stations and auto-related businesses are prohibited, except existing businesses, which are grandfathered under current ownership or tenancy only.

### 4.3 Site Design Guidelines

- 1. Placement of Structures.** In most cases, buildings should meet the property line at the back of the sidewalk, and should meet the structures on either side to form a street “wall.” The only exceptions to this would be for significant civic buildings (such as City Hall and the Courthouse, or a Church), mid-block pedestrian connections between parking and the street, and for the creation of spaces that enhance the public environment, such as pocket parks and outdoor dining areas. Such exceptions should be reviewed and approved by the City and the Historic District Commission.
- 2. Off-street parking.** Parking must meet all applicable City standards, and the following also applies within the CBD. Parking should be located to the rear of buildings, or by exception on the side. Access to parking should be from the rear or from side streets. Parking should be shared by several or all the businesses on the block whenever possible. Parking must be screened from the street and sidewalks with a 30-36” hedge or masonry wall, or with a taller fence of masonry and metal pickets (see pictures at left and on page 22). In no case should parking be screened with solid materials taller than 36” because of the need for security and surveillance. Parking must meet all applicable City standards, and be set back a minimum of 5’ from all property lines. Existing parking in front of buildings shall be removed. Existing or new parking to the side of buildings should only be allowed by exception, and only if appropriately screened and landscaped.

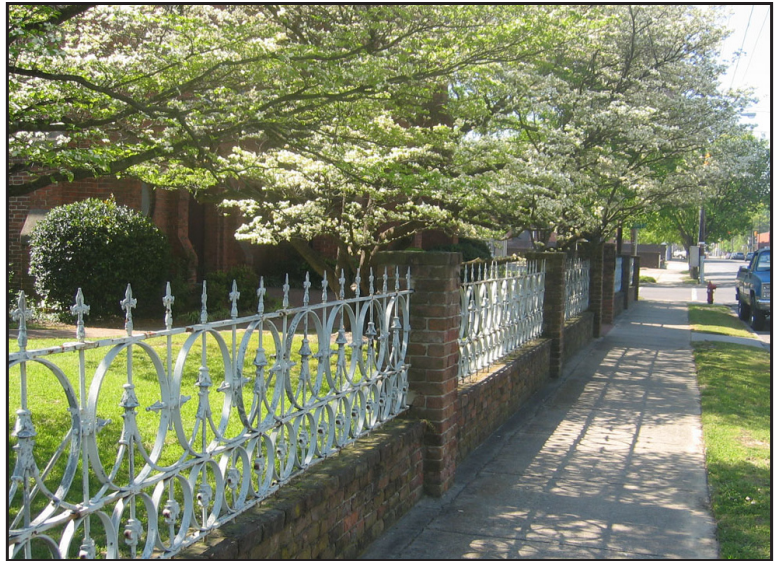


The top photo shows appropriate trash enclosure constructed of broken-face block and with wood gates. The photo below shows a pedestrian walk-through from parking to the street. Pedestrian connections in the CBD should be designed with attention to detail to welcome visitors.



3. **Service areas.** Service areas must be screened from public view, including loading areas, trash receptacles, mechanical equipment and dumpsters. In high-density areas, dumpsters should be consolidated to serve several businesses. Enclosures near buildings should be constructed of materials similar to the building, and must be high enough to completely block views from street level. Enclosures further from buildings should be of approved masonry or wood fencing. See example at left.
4. **Storage areas.** Areas used to store vehicles, equipment, or materials must be screened with a masonry wall, hedge or fence with landscaping of sufficient height and density to block views from street level.
5. **Pedestrian access.** Parking areas for commercial businesses must have clearly marked and well-lit pedestrian access from parking to public sidewalks and building entries. See example at left, where lighting and paving match the quality and style of the downtown area (example from New Bern).
6. **Rear entries.** Attractive rear entries to businesses are encouraged. If residential units occur in the upper floors of commercial buildings, entries adjacent to parking areas are required. In large developments, rear entries and interior or exterior passageways to the primary streets are encouraged.
7. **Driveways.** Wherever possible, driveways should be consolidated within a property or combined to provide access to two or more adjacent properties. Driveways from the main pedestrian thoroughfares in the downtown are discouraged, with access from side streets or to the rear of the property preferred.
8. **“Drive-Through” businesses are discouraged in the downtown.** Businesses that rely solely on drive-through traffic shall not be allowed in the downtown. Drive-through windows for all businesses (e.g. restaurants, banks and pharmacies) should be located to the rear of the buildings or screened from the street with access and egress configured to minimize disruption of pedestrian movement. All drive-through configurations should be allowed only as exceptions and must be reviewed and approved by the reviewing agencies.
10. **Adjacent residential uses.** Where commercial uses abut residential areas consisting primarily of detached or attached homes, an approved 6' masonry or wooden fence must be installed to screen parking and service areas. Where the parking area to be screened is two bays or more in size, a 10' setback with trees in addition to a fence is also required.
11. **Fencing and screening materials.**
  - Double staggered row of approved hedge material
  - Landscaped beds acting as screens with approval and appropriate ongoing maintenance



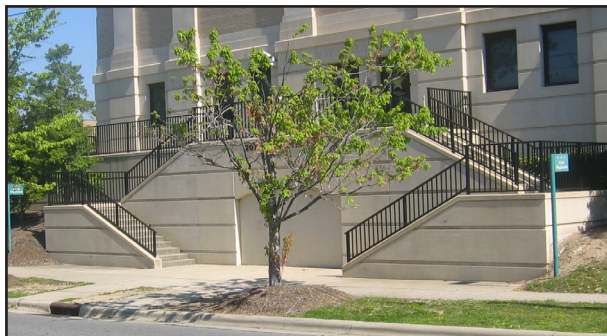


Examples of **appropriate** screening and fencing. Top right, masonry piers and low foundation wall with metal pickets for perimeter or parking screening; above left, masonry wall to screen storage areas; left; ornamental metal pickets for perimeter fencing; below, stucco walls to complement architectural details of building. See also split-face block on page 20.

- Masonry piers and low foundation with metal pickets (for parking areas only, not storage areas)
- Masonry or split-face block walls for screening
- Approved wooden privacy fencing (in the rear of properties only)
- Poured concrete, broken face block or light stucco finish block.

**Prohibited screening and fencing materials:**

- Chain or chain link (except temporary installations at construction sites)
- Unfinished pipe railings
- Split rail, stockade, picket or other suburban/rural styles of fencing
- Prefabricated wooden fencing
- Prefabricated PVC fencing
- Unfinished concrete block



**Inappropriate** screening and fencing materials including split rail (above) and chain and galvanized pipe railing (left).



## 4.4 CBD Commercial Architectural Guidelines

For **historic commercial buildings with altered facades**, these guidelines are meant to help restore appropriate proportions and materials. Information on appropriate materials is contained in Section 3.0, Historic Design Guidelines. Where historic photographs or drawings remain, these documents should guide restoration work. Where none exist, the historic design guidelines are the primary reference, and the guidelines below can help in reestablishing the harmony of traditional storefronts.

**The architecture of new structures** within the Central Business District should enhance the existing architecturally or historically significant buildings that will remain. These guidelines do **not** promote the idea that new construction should be designed to look “historic”. New construction should be “traditional” in character, while reflecting the time period of its creation. Consistency in the use of materials and details can help define the Central Business District’s sense of place. The traditional multi-story “storefront” structure should be the predominant building type in the Central Business District, especially on Center and Walnut Streets. See Section 5 for guidelines for new residential construction.



*The above buildings are an example (from Walnut Street) of a continuous “street wall” containing the pedestrian space. See item 1 at right.*



*The building on the right, though new, is “traditional” in character, with mass, height, window scale and type, material, and embellishment similar to historic structures nearby.*

1. **Placement of Structures.** New or replacement structures should front on the sidewalk in line with existing structures, with exceptions for public space and significant buildings as noted in the site design guidelines. This will continue the pattern of building facades enclosing the pedestrian space. Most buildings should be constructed to fill the full width of a given property, to create a street front “wall” composed of several buildings. Carefully located alleys that allow pedestrian access from city block interiors and light to upper stories are also allowed with site plan review and approval.
2. **Massing and Height.** Heights allowed are specified in the zoning ordinance. It is assumed that most new commercial buildings will be 2-3 stories, but buildings taller than this will be allowed with review. When designing taller buildings that will be sited near buildings that are 2-3 stories, care should be taken to ensure that the taller buildings do not overwhelm the shorter buildings. This can be accomplished by such architectural design elements as setbacks of the taller portion of the building at the two- or three-story level, and articulation and massing that allows light to reach surrounding buildings and the street.
3. **Materials.** Recommended materials for the CBD include:

### **Siding Materials**

- Brick in approved range of colors (for the predominant exterior material). Brick used in new construction shall not be painted. Brick may be painted in rehabilita-

tion projects subject to the approval of the reviewing agency.

- Stone, cast stone or architectural concrete

##### **Trim or accent materials**

- Split-face concrete masonry
- Ceramic tile in appropriate colors
- Wood (e.g. accent material such as panelled store-fronts)
- Metal framing (Note: aluminum storefront framing systems must be designed with careful consideration of proper proportions of the framing members in order to be successful)
- Cast or wrought iron
- Smooth textured stucco
- Sheet metal (parapet wall copings, etc.)
- Fabricated millwork (Fiberglass or structural foam)

##### **Glazing Materials**

- Clear glass, glass block
- Textured, faceted or stained glass as an accent.

##### **Roofing Materials**

- Standing-seam metal roofs
- Slate
- Clay tile
- Membrane roofing (built-up roofing, single-ply roofing, etc.) screened by parapets at front and sides

##### **Awnings**

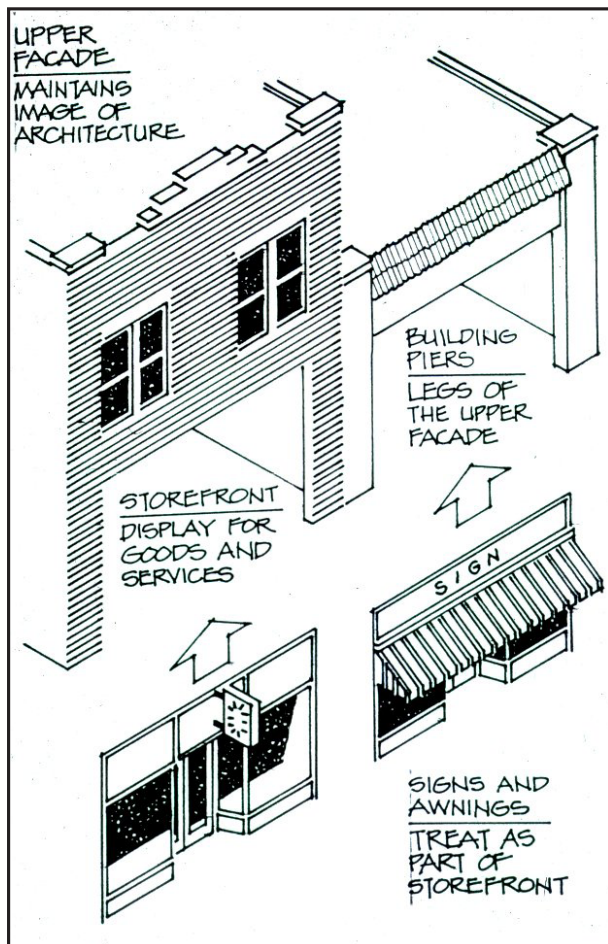
- Fabric awnings only

##### **Prohibited materials include:**

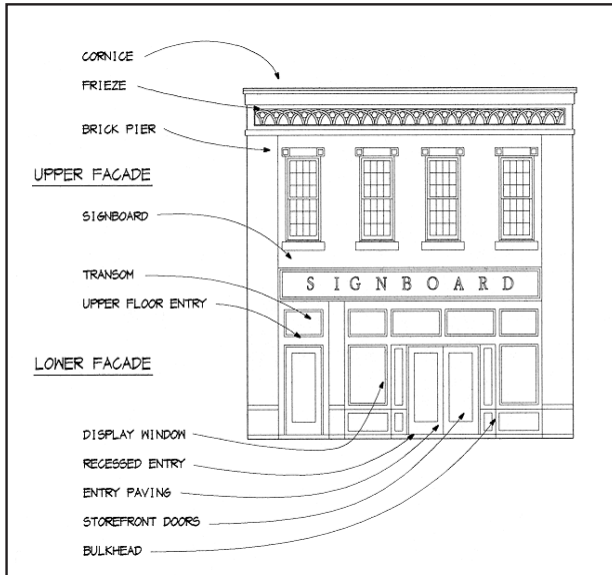
- "Mirrored" or opaque glass
- Colored glass
- Wood shakes or shingles
- Heavily textured stucco
- Imitation stone texturing (formstone)
- Clapboard sidings, whether wood or alternative materials
- Metal Awnings or canopies
- Backlit canopies or awnings
- Plastic awnings

4. **Building Scale and Proportion.** In general, building facades in the Central Business District should have windows that have a vertical emphasis, that is, windows that are taller than they are wide. Windows should be organized into regularly spaced patterns within the wall surface. The building facade should be broken into vertical and horizontal "panels" through the use of pilasters or other surface textures. See examples at left and on the next page.

*The parts of a commercial building facade.*







Parts of the commercial storefront.



Attractive storefronts add interest and color to the street.



5. **Building Elements.** The various components used in the composition of a building design greatly affect the success of a design and its compatibility with its context. The following descriptions provide guidance for various components used in traditional commercial structures.

#### ***Upper Floor Windows:***

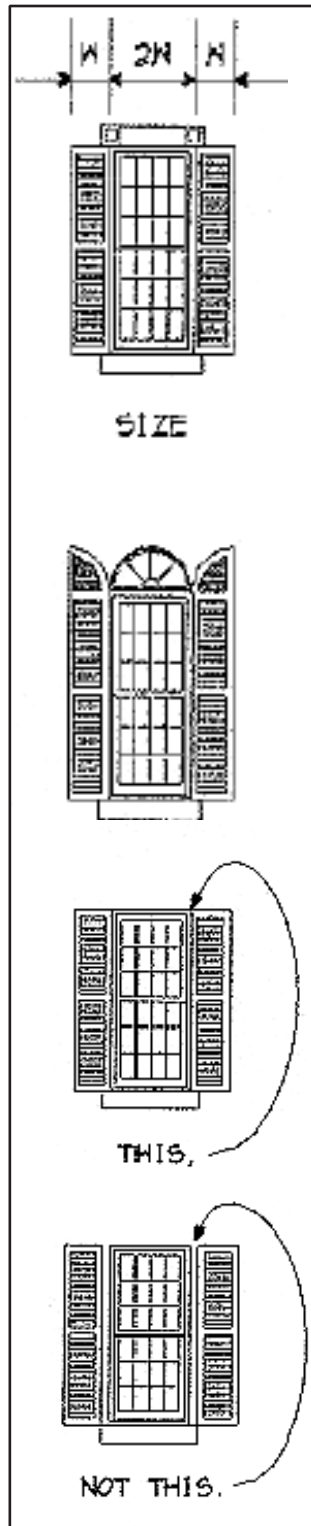
The most typical type of window found in the upper floors of traditional commercial buildings in this region is double-hung sash. These windows are taller than they are wide, and have a horizontal rail that divides the upper half from the lower. A wide variety of contemporary window types constructed from a range of materials can be used to successfully interpret this tradition. Acceptable window types include single-hung and double-hung. Additional configurations such as casement sash or fixed windows may be acceptable if configured with a horizontal rail that mimics the proportions of double-hung sash. Windows may have further dividing members, but such divisions shall be either “true divided light” construction or permanent exterior grilles. Interior grilles alone or grilles set between the panes of double glazing are not acceptable. Windows may be constructed of wood, wood clad in vinyl or prefinished metal, or from aluminum or other appropriate metals.

#### ***Storefronts***

The first floor storefront should be composed of large expanses of glazed openings (see examples at left). These allow for the display of merchandise in retail uses, but are also appropriate for other uses such as restaurants or offices. Features such as transoms allow for natural light to penetrate deeply into the building. The use of awnings can shade these large glass areas and allow for the introduction of appropriate colors to enliven the pedestrian experience. Framing for storefront glazing should be wood or metal. Metal framing should be a minimum of 2” wide.

#### ***Doors***

A major factor in the creation of a compatible building design is consistency. It is imperative that the doors used on commercial structures follow the traditional format for “commercial” doors. The use of door configurations more typically found on residential structures such as paneled doors or “crossbuck” doors is not appropriate. If aluminum storefront doors are used, only the “wide stile” type of door is appropriate. “Narrow” or “medium” stile aluminum doors should not be used. Metal and wood framing for storefront glazing should be a minimum of 2” wide.



*Some characteristics of shutters. Often shutters on the first floor of commercial buildings were solid or panelled, and on the second floor were louvered.*

### Shutters

Shutters can provide emphasis to the upper stories of a building and can introduce elements of color to a building facade. However, there are some basic requirements for shutters to be appropriately installed. The size and shape of shutters should correspond to the size and shape of the window opening (see drawings at left). Shutters can be mounted to operate, or if mounted in a fixed position, should be placed immediately adjacent to the window jamb (see illustration on the next page). Wood and architectural composites (by approval) are acceptable materials for shutters. PVC plastic is prohibited.

### Equipment and Technology

Mechanical equipment should be located on the roof or at the rear of buildings if ground-mounted equipment is used. Ground mounted equipment shall be screened and rooftop equipment shall not be visible from the street. Careful planning of rooftop equipment locations will allow the roof parapet, roof, or roof forms to serve as an effective screen.

Many companies utilize satellite dishes for business purposes. Television antennae, satellite dishes and similar equipment should be as small as feasible and located so as not to be visible from the street.