

City of Jackson

**Design  
Guidelines  
for  
B-3  
Central  
Business  
District**

# Introduction

The following design guidelines are put forth in an effort to aid the future development of the Jackson Downtown area by identifying desirable aesthetic qualities. Guidelines provide consistency and avoid arbitrary design, thereby giving the tools and advice needed to integrate new constructions and remodeling into the surrounding community.

The intent is to establish guidelines which will enhance the environment for trade, entertainment, and leisure through basic principles of design, such as building texture, color, rhythm, and pattern.

The result will be to develop a satisfactory visual impact within the Downtown, preserve taxable values, and promote public health, safety, and welfare.

These guidelines will introduce the Downtown community to the future, while maintaining its rich heritage.

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# I. Intent and Purpose

These Design Guidelines are intended to ensure compatible development and redevelopment with the CBD. Specifically, these design standards are intended to:

- Protect the property values for the owners in downtown by providing for local control of future growth and development.
- Enhance the economic viability of the area, as well as the diversity of uses and activities.
- Insure the compatibility of new buildings with respect to the specific character of their immediate context.
- Encourage active ground floor uses, such as restaurants, shops, and services to animate the street.
- Provide for the sensitive placement of public spaces in relationship to buildings masses, street furniture, and landscaping features.
- Maintain a scale and form of development that emphasizes sensitivity of the pedestrian environment.
- Accommodate parking needs while still maintaining a pedestrian-oriented urban environment.

# II. Applicability

These Design Guidelines are applicable to the area in Downtown Jackson currently zoned B-3 Central Business District (CBD). This area is generally defined as, but not limited to, the area bounded by Cumberland Street to the east, Sycamore Street to the south, New Market Street to the west, and the abandoned railroad right of way owned by the City of Jackson to the north.

Any property within the B-3 Central Business District which is historically designated will be reviewed by the Jackson-Madison County Historic Zoning Commission.

These guidelines may be waived in part or whole for (1) restoration projects as deemed necessary by the review committee to preserve the valuable historical character of the building, or (2) to accommodate a unique design of outstanding merit which clearly enhances the aesthetic value of the surrounding buildings.

# III. Architectural Requirements

## A. General

Comply with all codes and ordinances adopted by the City of Jackson.

## B. Buildings

New buildings shall be compatible with the existing adjacent buildings in scale, height, materials, massing, and rhythm and proportion of openings. New buildings that are used to fill vacant space between buildings shall be compatible with adjacent buildings in height, scale, proportion of openings, and materials. They shall be aligned with the existing setbacks and oriented to the street in a similar manner.

(See Figures 1, 2, & 3)

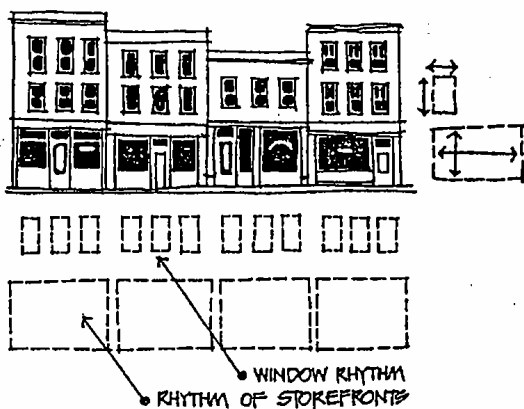


Figure 1



Figure 2

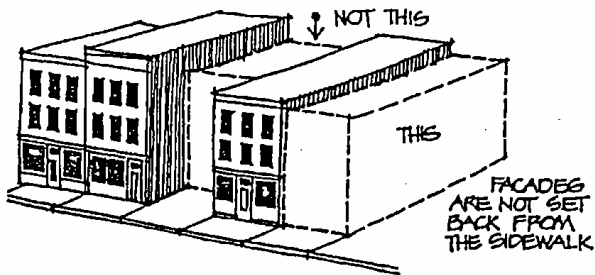


Figure 3

### C. Building Height

New building construction shall be no more than one story above or below the highest building adjacent to the proposed building.

### D. Massing

Long uninterrupted facades shall be avoided. Additions shall be compatible with design and complimentary to the existing structure. They shall have a lower roof, a compatible design that is not imitative, similar proportion and rhythm of openings, and shall be secondary in importance to the existing building.

## **E. Facades**

Building facades shall emphasize clearly articulated main entrances using such features as awnings, canopies, columns, pilasters and/or recessed entrances. Window and door openings should have a vertical orientation and alignment. For new construction, façade treatment on a side street is encouraged to be similar to the primary façade treatment. Rear and side facades can be enhanced by adding simple signage, canopies, and lighting that are related to the front façade and are approved by the Planning Commission. Rear and side entrances shall be kept clear and uncluttered. If required, new windows and doors may be added to existing buildings using compatible materials, sizes, design, and proportions, HVAC units, dumpsters, and trash containers placed at rear or side facades shall be screened using approved fencing, landscaping, or solid walls compatible with the building design.

## **F. Roofs**

Roof forms should be appropriate to the building's architecture and surrounding context. Existing roof parapet walls and features shall not be altered or removed. Sloped roofs are acceptable as long as the new roofline is not visible on the primary façade and is constructed below the roof parapet wall.

## **G. Materials**

Materials, textures, and colors should be appropriate for the building's architecture and surrounding context. Exterior insulation finish systems and metal panels shall be considered for use only upon careful review by the Planning Commission. Vinyl and aluminum siding are not allowed.

## H. Canopies

Canopies are appropriate at ground-floor level and on upper levels, provided they compliment the building's architectural style, and do not conceal significant architectural features.

(See Figure 4)

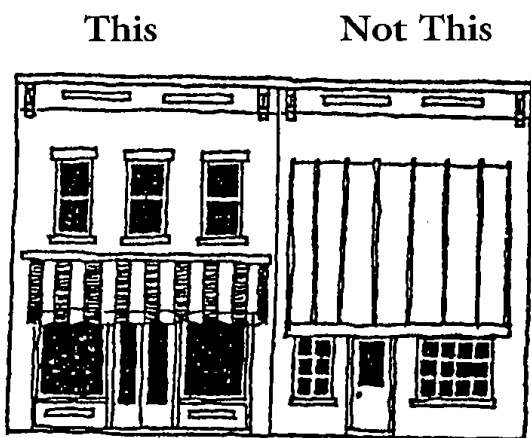


Figure 4

Canvas is the preferred material for canopies. Plastic or backlit canopies are not allowed. Awnings or canopies may be retractable or fixed. They shall be positioned individually within major structural bays of the building and designed to fit the opening in which they occur. Canopies or awnings shall maintain a clear height of seven (7) feet above the sidewalk, and shall not extend more than the width of the sidewalk.

# IV. Signage

Signs are a secondary design element to the building they are placed on and/or the surroundings they are placed within. When designing signs for this district, the signs must fit within the environment. Signs have the ability to enhance, or detract from the qualities of designed architecture and environment.

(See Figures 5 & 6)

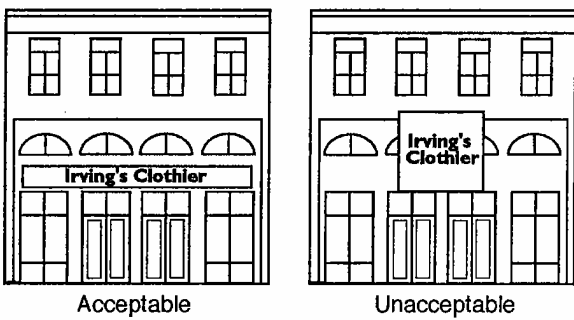


Figure 5



Figure 6

## **A. Requirements**

Therefore, signs within this district should meet the following criteria.

1. Signs must meet all city codes.
2. Sign types should fit within the architecture details of the building they are placed on. The building should frame the sign. The size of any sign should not destroy the continuity of the building.
3. Signs should relate to the architecture in at least one or more of the following categories; material shape, and color.

Ex: A dark green awning placed above a window could have trim to match stone lintels of the building.

## **B. Location and Size**

Sign location and size are important aspects of good sign design. When selecting a design, the most important thing to remember is that bigger is not necessarily better.

Although a sign must be clearly visible, it should never dominate the building façade nor obscure its architectural details. Regardless of the sign location you choose, it is important to keep the following design guidelines in mind:

1. Avoid overly large signs. Remember that unlike modern highway strip development, Downtown Jackson buildings and streets were built at a human scale, oriented to pedestrians, not cars. Consequently it is not necessary to depend on overly large signs to attract customers.

2. Do not obscure or destroy architectural details. Arches, glass transom panels, and decorative brickwork are just a few of the features found on many downtown buildings which reflect a quality of workmanship difficult to duplicate today. This detailing greatly enhances our downtown atmosphere.

3. Coordinate the placement of signage on adjacent storefronts, especially those on the same building. Placing higher or lower than adjacent signs may not increase readability, but instead create visual confusion. However, if the adjoining signs are over scaled or badly positioned, the only solution is to do what is best for your storefront and wait for neighboring merchants to follow your example.

## V. Sidewalks

Sidewalks along street right-of-ways shall be well maintained and provided where not already present. Where existing sidewalks are damaged or destroyed, they shall be replaced. Sidewalks shall be installed in accordance with the specifications set forth by the City Engineer.

## VI. Demolition

The demolition of a building can have a major impact on the integrity of downtown. Therefore, the demolition of a building without a specific plan for redevelopment shall be considered inappropriate except in cases where it has been determined that the building is unsafe and poses a threat to public safety.

Once the demolition has been approved and the building demolished, all debris shall be removed from the property in a timely manner.

The property shall be graded to provide proper drainage to adjacent drainage structures. Grading may be accomplished with soil or gravel or a combination of both. Erosion control measures shall be installed to prevent soil from contaminating adjacent properties and drainage structures in accordance with the City of Jackson's erosion control policy.

When demolishing a building for the sole purpose of establishing a parking area, the project will be reviewed as to the appropriateness of the location and means of ingress/egress. The project shall conform to all landscaping and design standards for parking areas as outlined in the City of Jackson Zoning Ordinance.

## VII. Application Procedures

All proposals that in the opinion of the Planning Staff will not constitute a significant deviation to the existing character or exterior appearance of a property within the B-3 Central Business District may be approved by the Planning Staff prior to any permits being issued by the City of Jackson.

All proposals that in the opinion of the Planning Staff will constitute a significant deviation to the existing character or exterior appearance of a property within the B-3 Central Business District shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission prior to any permits by the City of Jackson being issued. Proposals to the Planning Commission shall be submitted to the Planning Department in final form no later than three weeks prior to the Planning Commission meeting at which it will be reviewed.

All proposals in either of the above two cate-

gories shall include the following:

- One copy of a completed application form;
- One copy of a letter from the applicant describing the nature of the request;
- Two copies of a scaled preliminary site plan of the proposal which shows the basic layout (plus an 8 1/2 x 11 presentation copy for Planning Commission review);
- Two sets of architectural elevations of the sides of the building that would be viewable to the public (plus an 8 1/2 x 11 presentation copy for Planning Commission review);
- One sample of all exterior materials that will be used on the building;
- Application fee

## VIII. Revisions

Any future revisions to this document will be submitted to the Jackson Downtown Development Corporation and the property owners within the B-3 Central Business District for review and comment.