



CITY OF FLORENCE



DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS



DRAFT

02.25.2025



HERE IN FLORENCE...

DOWNTOWN IS OUR WELCOME MAT, AND HIGH QUALITY DESIGN IS OUR CALLING CARD.

Through dedication to the revitalization of the district exhibited through excellence in design and preservation, Downtown Florence has emerged as the center of history, arts, culture, and entertainment in the Pee Dee Region.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 FLORENCE BY DESIGN

Background	05
Design Principles	08
Downtown Districts	10

02 THE PROCESS

Standards Governance	19
Review Process	22
Submittal Process	22

03 THE STANDARDS

Design Standards	27	Franchise Architecture	60
Site Design	28	Drive-Throughs	61
Frontage Types	28	Signs	62
Building Placement	29	Public Realm	66
Building Height	32	Blocks & Streets	66
On-Site Open Space	34	Streetscape Elements	69
Outdoor Dining	36	Pedestrian Infrastructure	70
Screening	38	Bicycle Infrastructure	71
Landscape & Stormwater	40	Public Spaces	73
Parking	42	Placemaking	74
Building Design	44	Glossary	76
District Character	44		
Non-Residential Development	46		
Residential Development	54		

SECTION 01

FLORENCE BY DESIGN



Downtown Florence | James McCoy Photography

BACKGROUND

WHAT ARE DESIGN STANDARDS?

Design Standards provide a framework within which builders, developers, property owners, business owners, and City government can ensure that regional and local character are preserved downtown, that materials are appropriate for their application on historic structures, and that new development is neither an inauthentic recreation of a prior time nor place. In addition, the standards expand upon and explain the design intent of previously completed plans to ensure that new development and rehabilitation of existing structures will create a new, dynamic, harmonious, and unique downtown of which all citizens can be proud.

BENEFITS OF DESIGN STANDARDS

1. **Ensure high quality development within downtown.**
2. **Establish good urban design principles that influence how people use the space.**
3. **Shape a city's identity by encouraging compatible design.**
4. **Ensure the values of downtown properties are maintained and enhanced.**

KEEPING DESIGN STANDARDS UPDATED

The original Florence Design Standards were drafted in 2005 to function as guidance for City staff, residents, and appointed Design Review Board members tasked with reviewing projects in Florence's historic districts. Although the City ordinance has been regularly updated, the Design Standards have remained relatively unaltered since their adoption nearly two decades ago. Florence's seven downtown districts have seen considerable activity, Board members are often asked to interpret broad standards or consider new building materials that were not available when the standards were written.

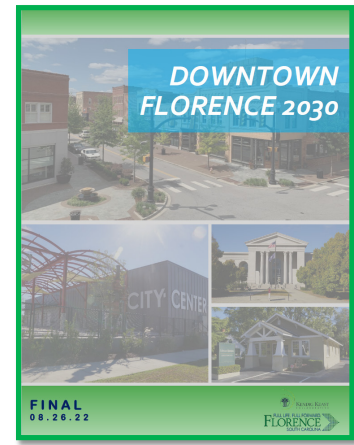
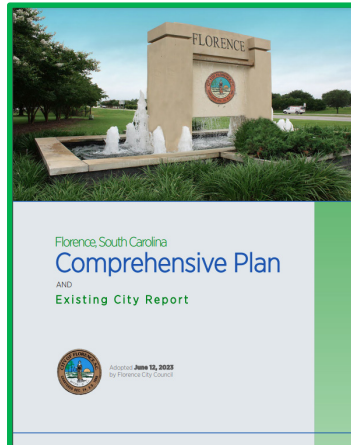
GOAL OF REVISED DOCUMENT

The updated Downtown Design Standards (Standards) address modern materials and technologies, expand and clarify the approval process, provide updated historic standards, and include more image-based content. Educating property owners and the general public on the value of historic preservation and historic character are also key objectives of the new Standards. The updated Standards provide a practical resource for current and prospective residents in the downtown districts, as well as Board members and City staff.

FREQUENCY OF UPDATES

To remain effective and relevant, the Standards should be reviewed and updated every 5 years, continuing to support the City's growth and identity. This regular review ensures adaptation to evolving construction technologies, materials, urban design trends, and community needs. Frequent updates allow the City to address unforeseen challenges, such as the introduction of innovative building practices, changes in zoning regulations, or shifting economic and social conditions within the downtown districts.

ALIGNMENT WITH POLICY AND PLANS



City of Florence Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)

Adopted on January 15, 2018, the [Unified Development Ordinance](#) includes zoning regulations for all land uses within the City limits, as well as regulations for the City's Planning Commission, Design Review Board, and Board of Zoning Appeals. Within the UDO, eight overlay districts are identified and all must adhere to the design standards of Division 4-16.3, Downtown Design District Site Development Standards.

Recommendations:

- Revise language as the Neighborhood Revitalization Overlay District (NROD) is not subject to these standards.
- Refer to the standards in the [UDO](#) as the Downtown Design Standards.

Source: <https://online.encodeplus.com/regs/florence-sc/index.aspx>

City of Florence Comprehensive Plan

The [Comprehensive Plan](#) for the City of Florence is a policy document that plans for and guides future development and redevelopment. The 2020 Comprehensive Plan updated the 2010 plan with a focus on the physical and economic aspects of Florence's projected growth and development in coming years. It provides guiding principles, goals, and action priorities. The 2020 City of Florence Comprehensive Plan was adopted by City Council on June 12, 2023.

Relevant Action Items:

- Stabilizing and enhancing Florence's neighborhoods.
- Continuing the momentum of downtown revitalization.
- Expecting quality in public and private development projects.

Source: https://www.cityofflorence.com/sites/default/files/uploads/florence_comprehensive_plan_adopted_06.12.23.pdf

Downtown Florence 2030 Master Plan

Completed in conjunction with the 2021-22 update of the Florence Comprehensive Plan, the [Downtown 2030 Master Plan](#) outlines a path for growth that centers on good design, emphasizes the importance of collaboration, champions diversity, and invites residents and visitors to experience the unique cultural place that is Downtown Florence.

Key Themes:

- Downtown As A Complete Community
- Downtown As The Heart Of The City
- Downtown With Strong Corridors
- Downtown With Optimized Land Use
- Downtown As A Connected Place

Source: https://www.cityofflorence.com/sites/default/files/uploads/florence_downtown_plan_final_adopted_june2023.pdf

DISTRICTS MAP

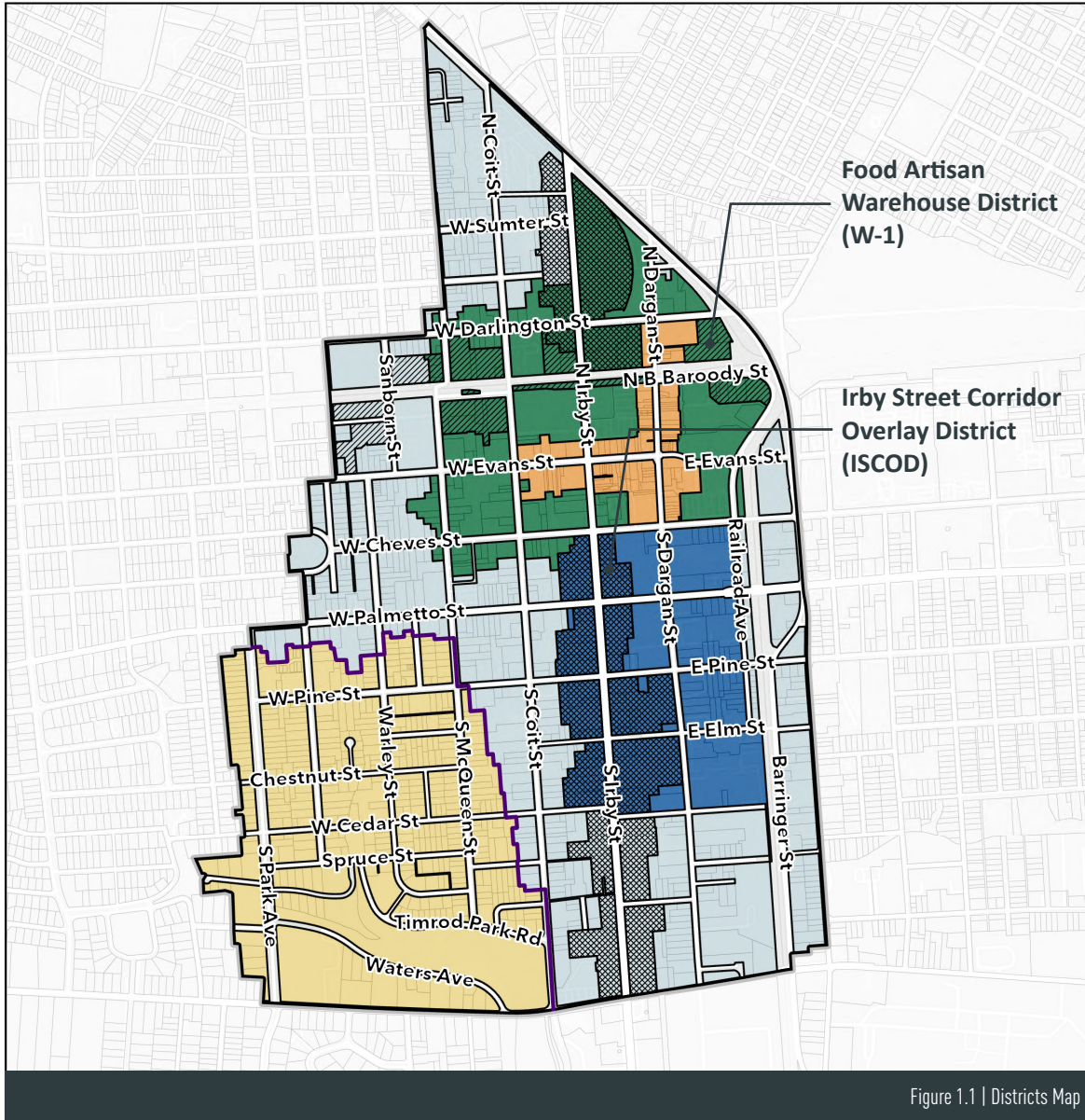
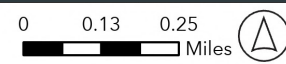


Figure 1.1 | Districts Map



- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Downtown Boundary | Downtown Central Business District (D-2) | Timrod Park Residential District (D-4) | Food Artisan Warehouse District (W-1) |
| Parcels | Downtown Arts & Culture District (D-3) | Downtown Historic District (H-1) | Irby Street Corridor Overlay District (ISCOD) |
| D-1/D-4 Division Line | | | |
| Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1) | | | |

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

DESIGN PRINCIPLES SHOULD GUIDE DECISION MAKING REGARDING APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT.



ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A UNIFIED, IMPROVED IDENTITY FOR DOWNTOWN



RESPECT AND BUILD ON THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF DOWNTOWN FLORENCE



ESTABLISH PLACEMAKING WITHIN EACH OF THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS



ENCOURAGE MIXED USES DOWNTOWN



**AVOID SUBURBAN OR RURAL
LAND USE PATTERNS IN THE
DOWNTOWN**



**UNIFY DOWNTOWN DESIGN
ELEMENTS WHILE ALLOWING
DISTRICT INDIVIDUALITY**



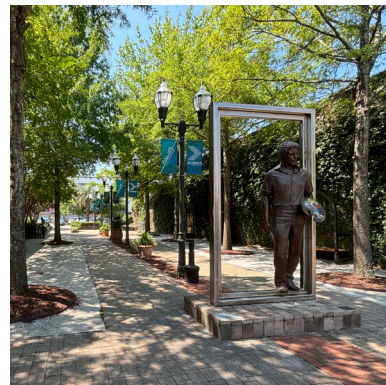
**ENHANCE GATEWAYS AND
CORRIDORS**



**CREATE A COORDINATED
SYSTEM OF DOWNTOWN
SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING**



**GIVE PRIORITY TO
PEDESTRIANS**



**CREATE PEDESTRIAN SPACES
THAT ADD TO THE VIBRANCY
OF DOWNTOWN FLORENCE**

DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

OVERVIEW

The Standards cover seven (7) districts. The overarching district is the Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1) which includes the Downtown Central Business District (D-2), Downtown Arts & Culture District (D-3), Downtown Historic District (H-1), Food Artisan Warehouse District (W-1), and Irby Street Corridor Overlay District (ISCOD). Standards vary in category and level of detail by district with the Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1) serving as the base district and the Downtown Historic District (H-1) being the most detailed.

Tier I Standards

Tier I includes baseline design standards for all commercial districts as they relate to the public realm, site, and some architectural features. The Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1) is in this tier.

Tier II Standards

Tier II Standards include standards that are specific to districts that are not residential or designated historic. This includes the Downtown Central Business District (D-2) and the Downtown Arts & Culture District (D-3).

Tier III Standards

Tier III covers residential standards, including the Timrod Park Residential District (D-4).

Tier IV Standards

Tier IV includes the following overlay districts: the Food Artisan Warehouse District (W-1) and the Irby Street Corridor Overlay District (ISCOD). These specialty overlay districts have more specific standards and take precedence over the underlying district standards.

Tier V Standards

Tier V includes standards that are specific to designated historic districts. This tier includes the Downtown Historic District (H-1). This tier has the most stringent requirements.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION	
	DISTRICT
TIER I	Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1)
TIER II	Downtown Central Business District (D-2)
	Downtown Arts and Culture District (D-3)
TIER III	Timrod Park Residential District (D-4)
TIER IV	Food Artisan Warehouse District (W-1)
	Irby Street Corridor Overlay District (ISCOD)
TIER V	Downtown Historic District (H-1)

Figure 1.2 | District Organization

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Tier I

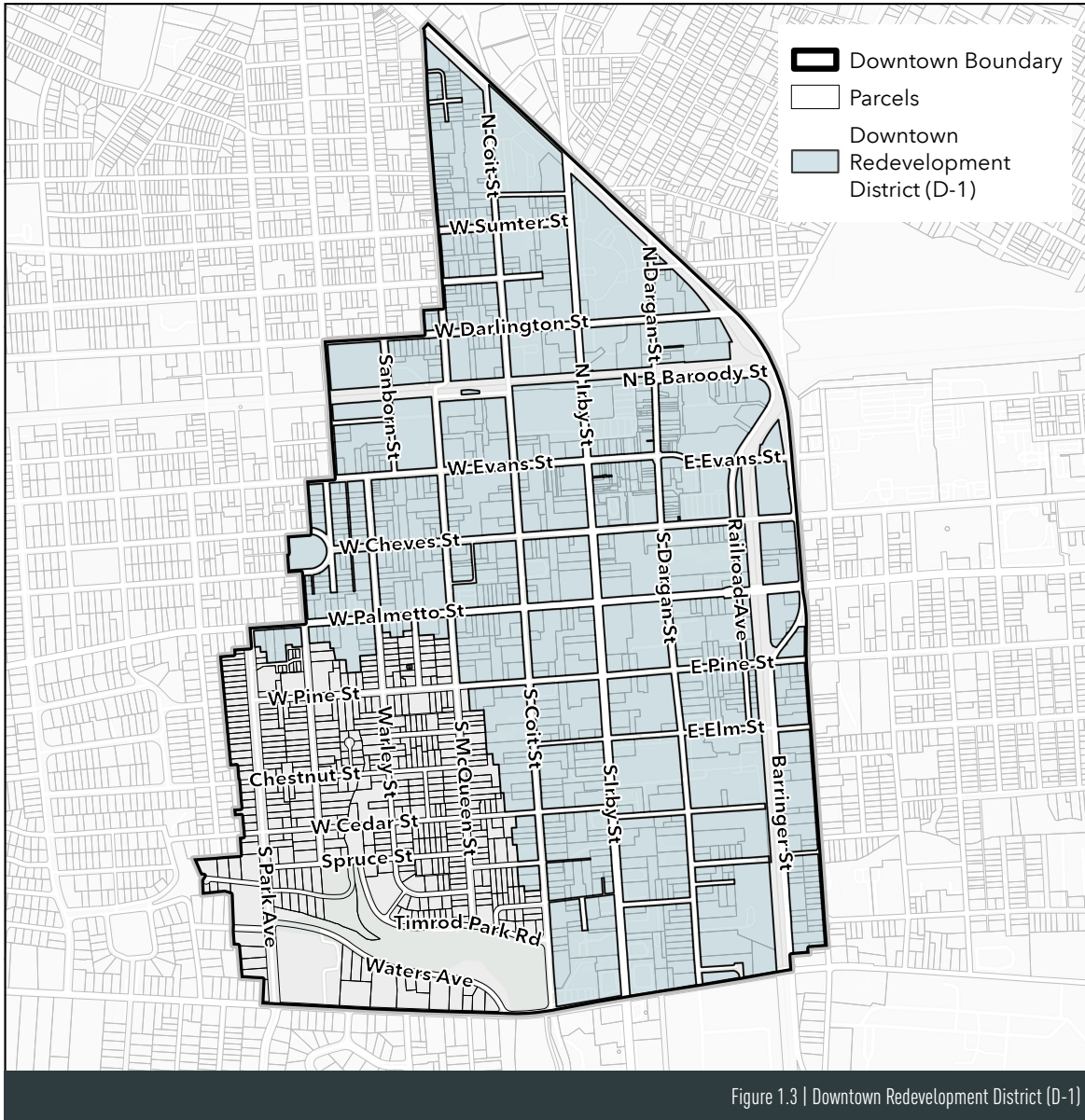


Figure 1.3 | Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1)

Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1)

The use areas in Downtown Florence are encompassed by a distinct geographic area known as the Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1). The intent of the D-1 District is to foster the cultural, economic, and general welfare of the public by providing a mechanism for the identification, recognition, conservation, maintenance, protection, and enhancement of existing architecturally valuable structures, properties, and neighborhoods.

DOWNTOWN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Tier II

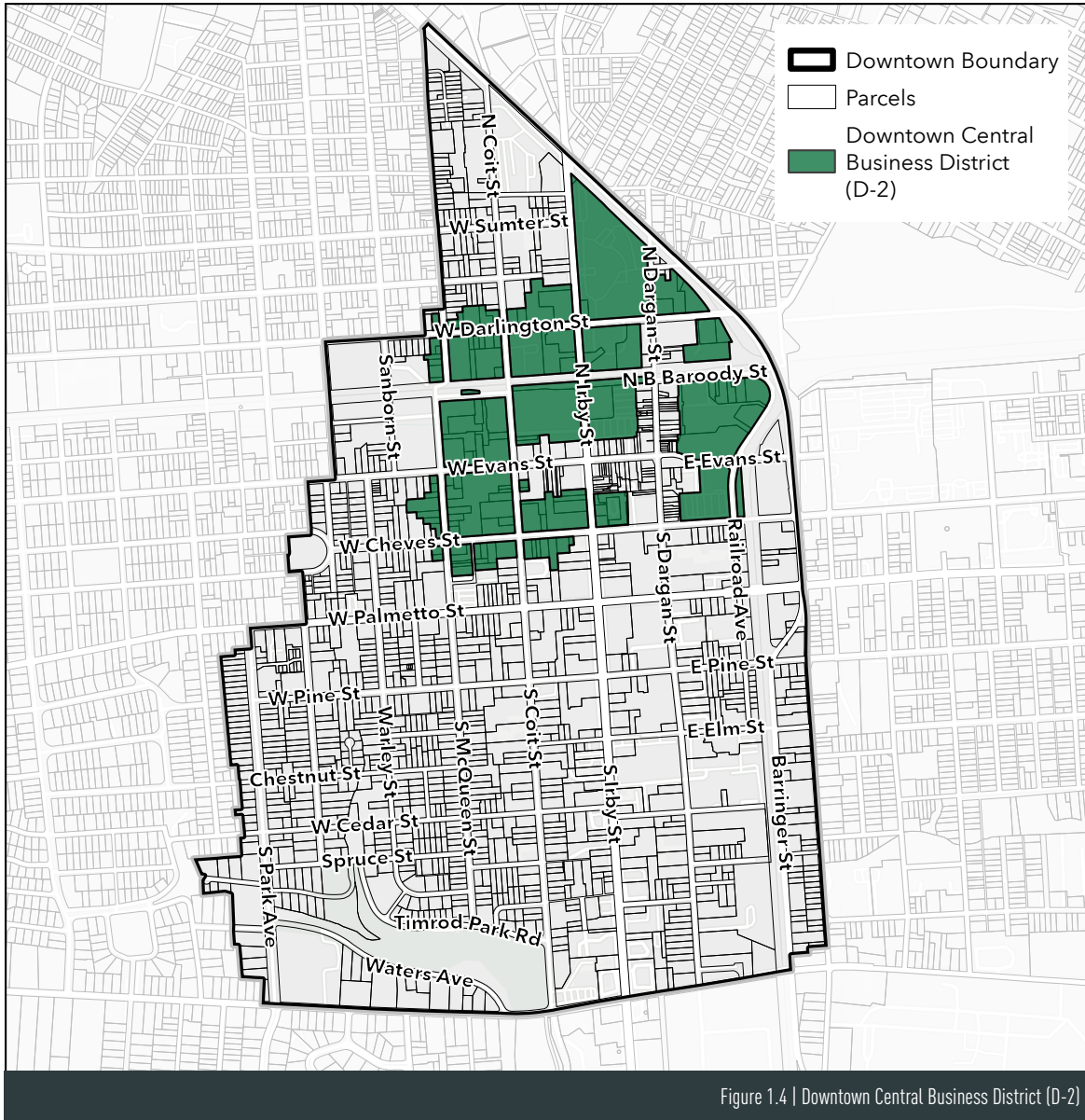
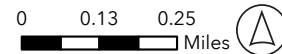


Figure 1.4 | Downtown Central Business District (D-2)

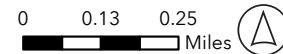
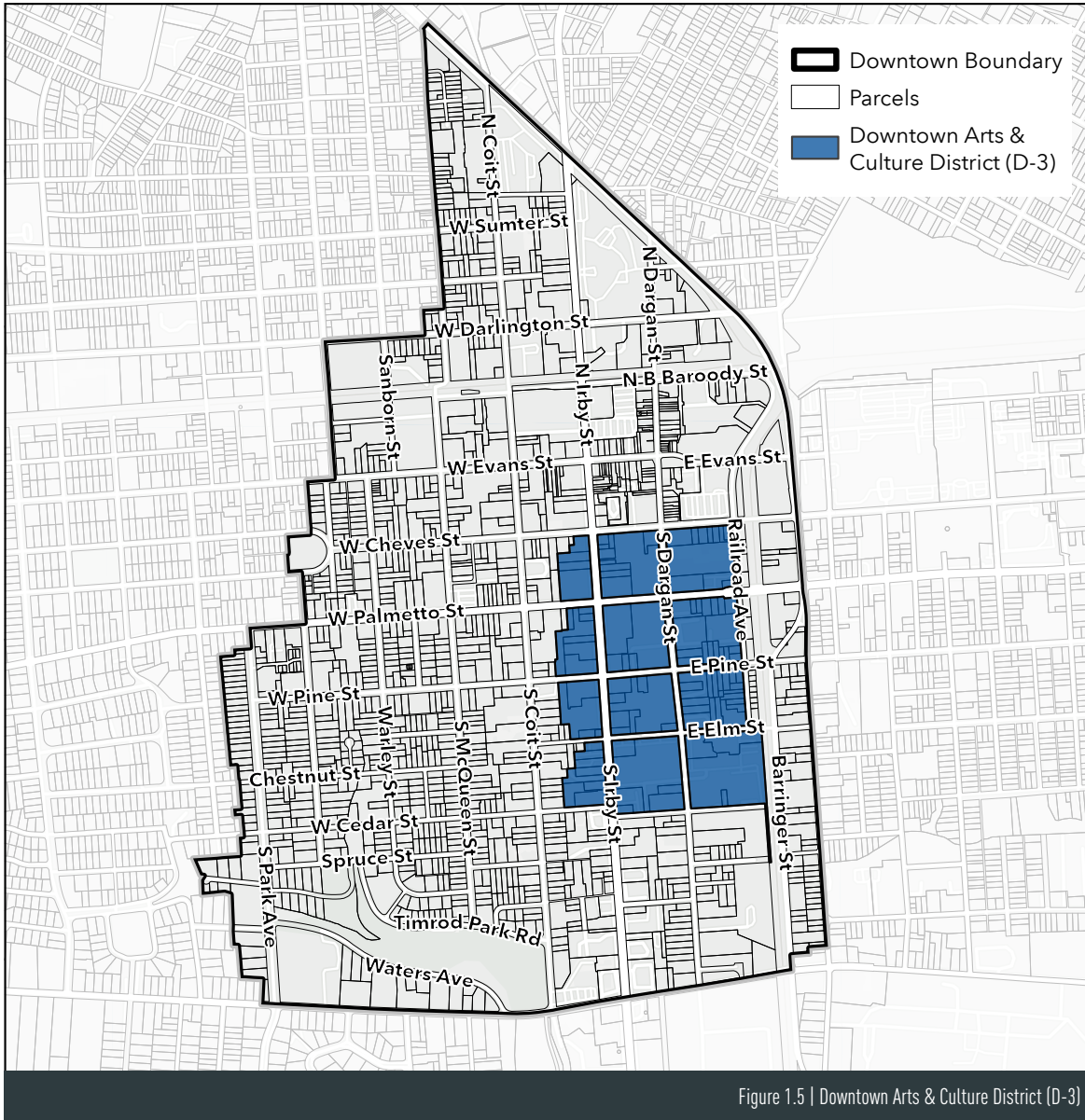


Downtown Central Business District (D-2)

The Downtown Central Business District (D-2) is a larger pedestrian-priority area in the downtown, characterized by a mix of uses and buildings constructed to the property line along the front and sides. The district includes some vacant land and buildings, offering opportunities to expand and strengthen the downtown core. It is mostly bounded by Cheves Street to the south, McQueen Street to the west, Darlington Street to the north, and Lucas / Barringer Streets to the east. The intent of the D-2 District is to promote good urban design while establishing and maintaining a cohesive and enhanced identity for downtown.

DOWNTOWN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT

Tier II



Downtown Arts & Culture District (D-3)

The Downtown Arts and Culture District (D-3) includes primarily Dargan and Irby Streets from Cheves Street south to the new library. The boundaries included Cheves Street to the north, Railroad and Barringer Streets to the east, Cedar Street to the south, and both sides of Irby Street to the west. The intent of this District is to promote good urban design, foster public art and artistic uses throughout the district, and build on the attractive and significant architecture through thoughtful infill development.

TIMROD PARK RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Tier III

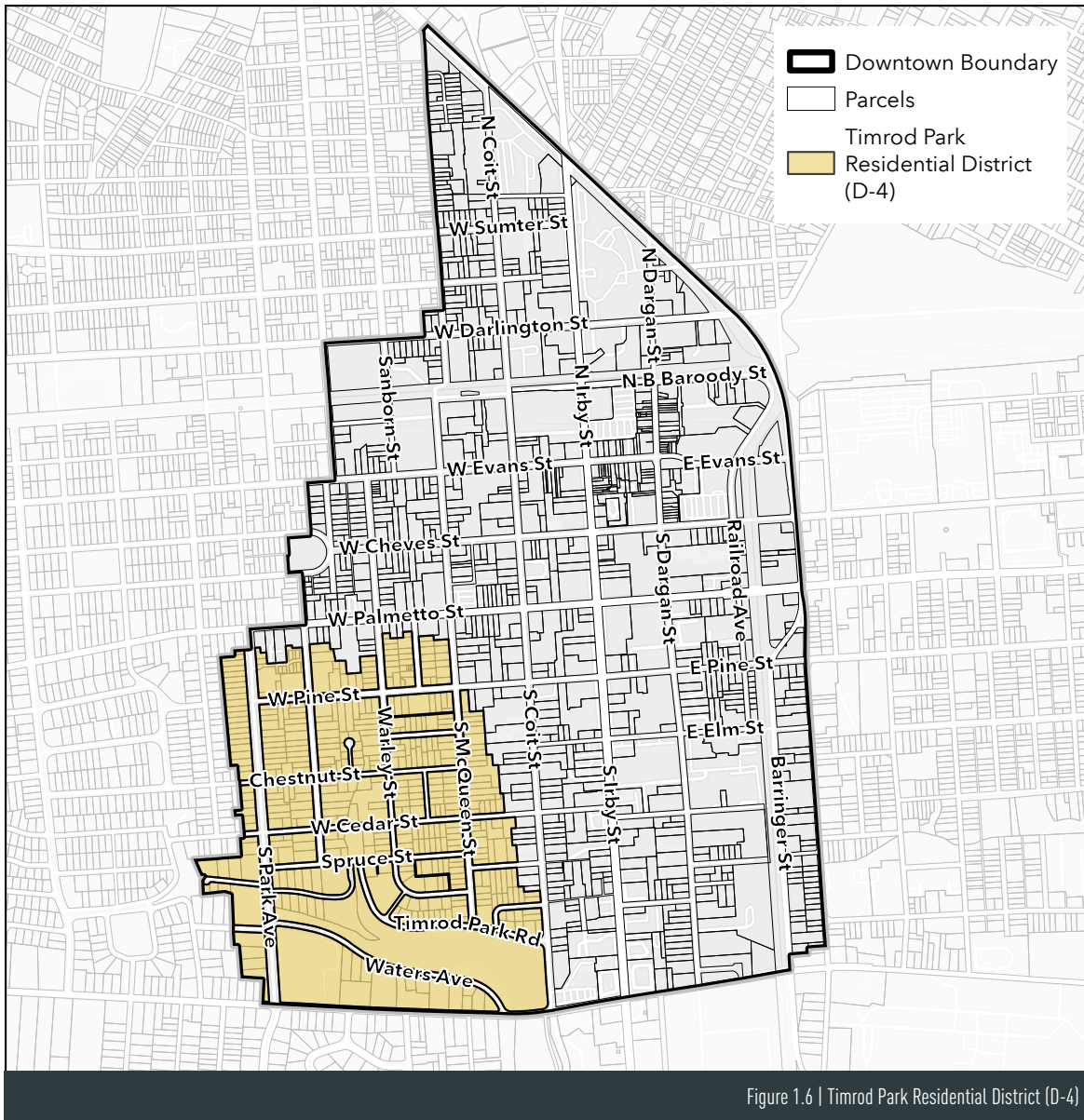


Figure 1.6 | Timrod Park Residential District (D-4)

Timrod Park Residential District (D-4)

Adjacent to the Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1) is the Tier III - Timrod Park Residential District (D-4). The intent of this district is to maintain the general quality and appearance of the historic residential area and to encourage redevelopment while preserving and promoting the historic, varied character of the residential neighborhood. It is mostly bounded by South McQueen Street to the east, Cherokee Road to the south, Park Avenue to the west, and West Palmetto Street to the north.

FOOD ARTISAN WAREHOUSE DISTRICT

Tier IV

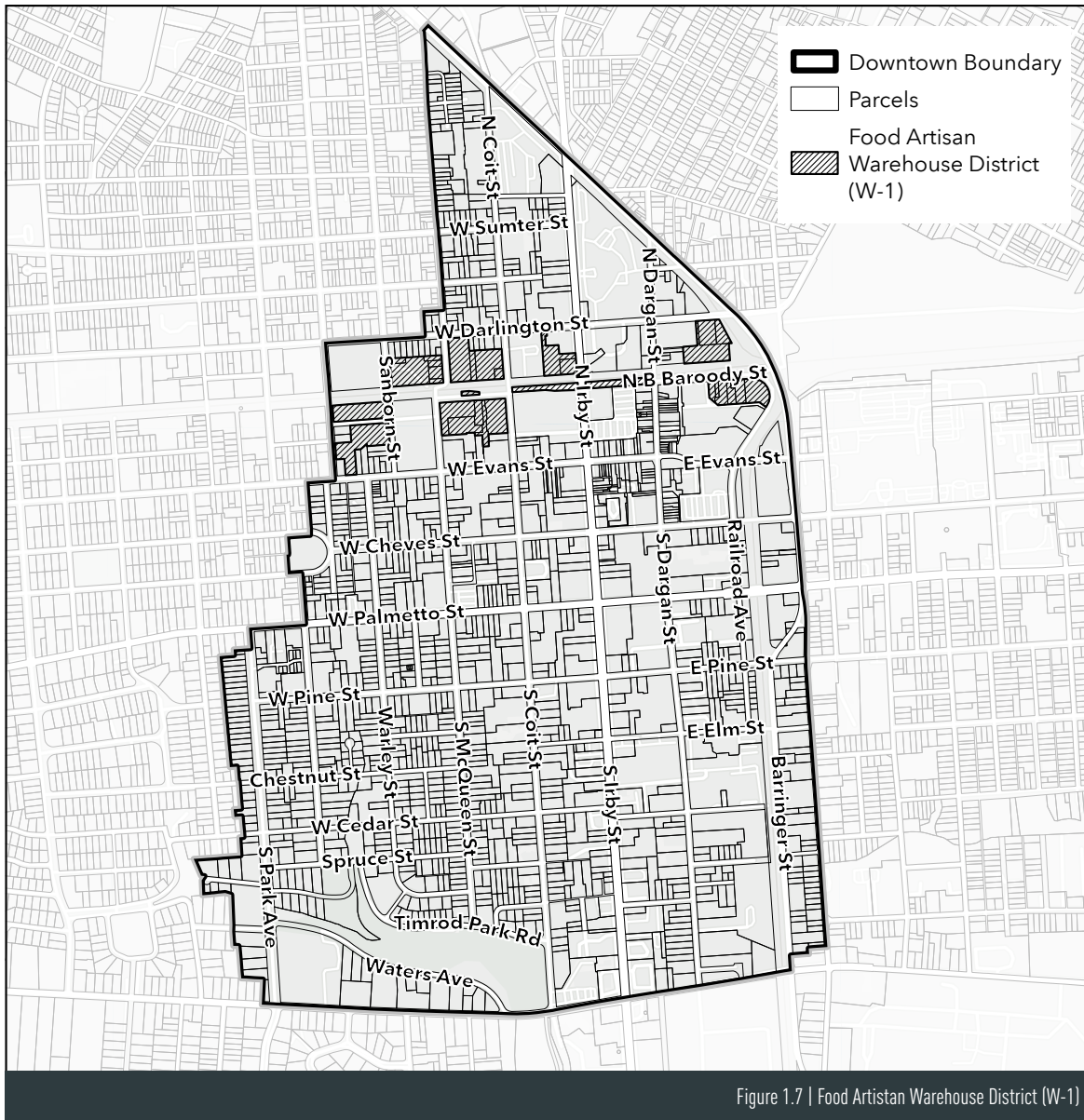


Figure 1.7 | Food Artisan Warehouse District (W-1)

Food Artisan Warehouse District (W-1)

Along N B Baroody Street from Lucas Street on the east to Chase Street on the west, is the Food Artisan Warehouse District (W-1). The intent of this overlay is to create a district that will foster and promote a mixed land use in close proximity to downtown that incorporates small-scale industrial food and beverage manufacturing, food retail, farmers’ markets, and a variety of other artisan manufacturing land uses.

IRBY STREET CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

Tier IV

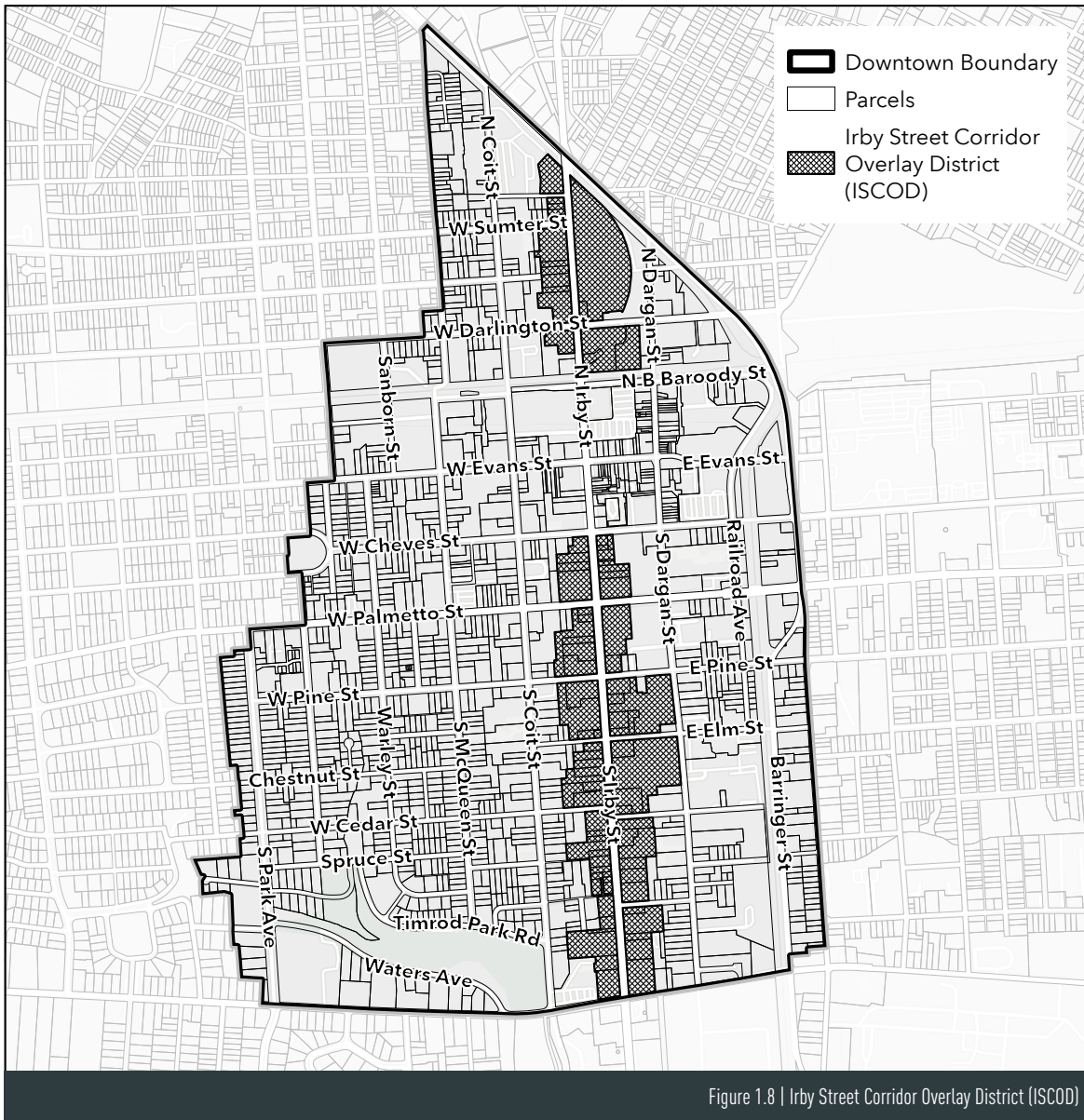


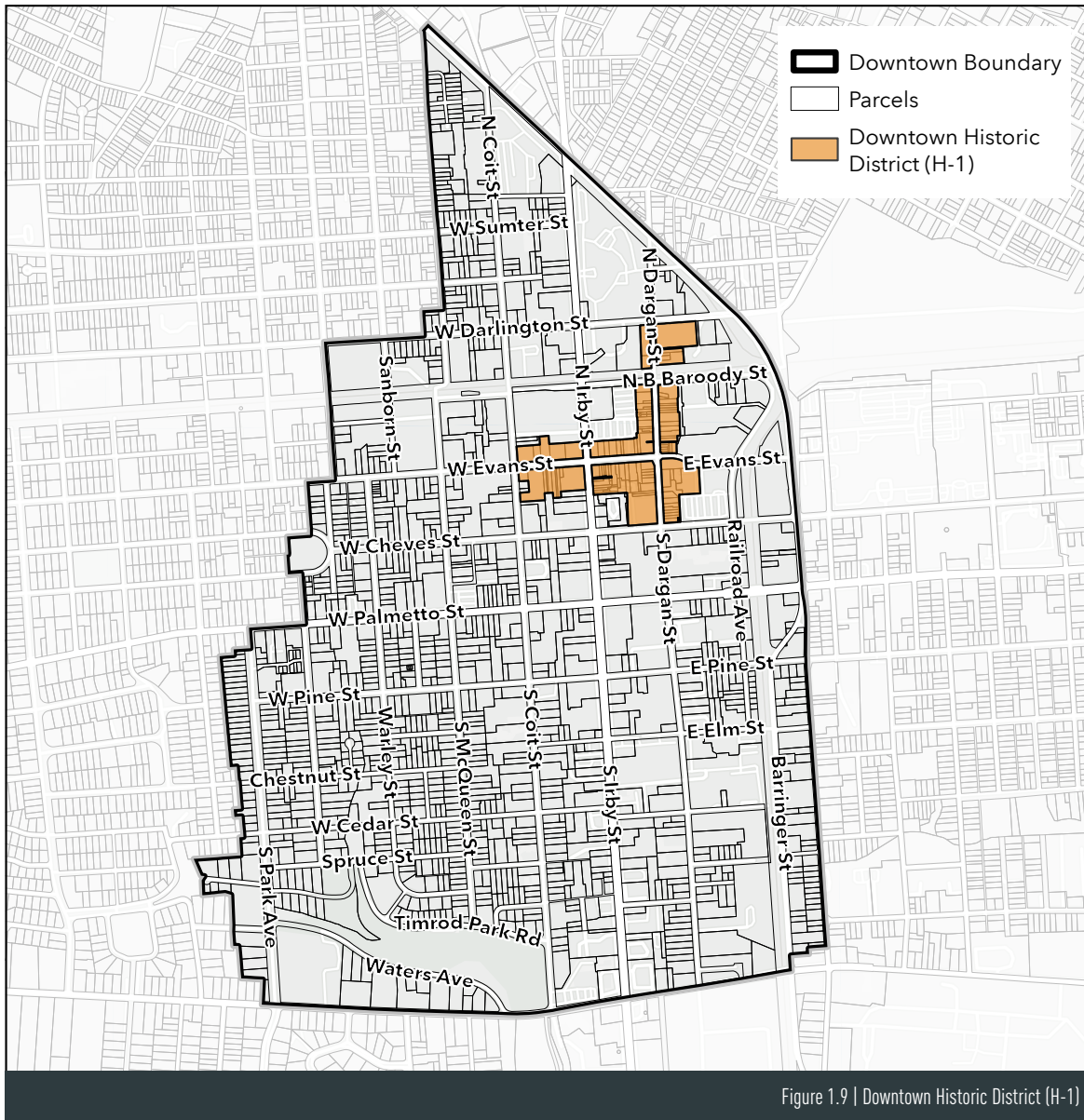
Figure 1.8 | Irby Street Corridor Overlay District (ISCOD)

Irby Street Corridor Overlay District (ISCOD)

The intent of this district is to foster redevelopment of properties adjacent to the US Highway 52 / Irby Street Corridor for the purpose of creating and maintaining a safe, efficient, functional, and attractive corridor that prioritizes pedestrians through the City of Florence downtown. The overlay encourages redevelopment of existing structures in a manner which enhances the character of the corridor, reduces conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and promotes economic vibrancy in the community.

DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

Tier V



Downtown Historic District (H-1)

The Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1) is the traditional and historic heart of the downtown, and is comprised primarily of buildings on Dargan Street from Darlington Street south to the intersection with Cheves Street, and on Evans Street from a little past Dargan Street west to Coit Street. The intent of the H-1 District is to preserve and build on the historic character of Downtown Florence. It includes the portion of the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1) that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

SECTION 02

THE PROCESS



City Center Farmers Market | City of Florence

STANDARDS GOVERNANCE

PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

The Planning, Research, and Development Department includes the offices of Planning, Engineering, and Downtown Development.

- The **Planning Department** directs the City's Unified Development Ordinance for zoning and general development.
- The **Engineering Department** administers stormwater regulations and oversees utility and infrastructure installation.
- The **Downtown Development Department** facilitates commercial development in the historic downtown center.

The Planning Department administers the City's three review boards.

- The **Planning Commission (PC)** oversees the Unified Development Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan, approving zoning, rezoning requests, and annexation requests.
- The **Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)** hears requests for variances, appeals from rulings of the planning director, and issues special exception permits as required by the Unified Development Ordinance.
- The **Design Review Board (DRB)** issues Certificates of Appropriateness (COA), reviews Major Projects, and administers the Downtown Design Standards for Downtown Florence, SC.

Downtown Development Department

The Downtown Development Department manages the revitalization of the Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1). The department works with existing businesses and property owners to renovate or rehabilitate existing properties as well as with local entrepreneurs on the development of new business in the downtown area.

Main Street Program

The Downtown Development Department is a member of Main Street South Carolina and Main Street America, organizations dedicated

to preservation-based economic development. Downtown Florence, a Nationally Accredited Main Street Program, won the 2023 Great American Main Street Award presented by Main Street America.

Local Incentives

The Downtown Development Department provides resources to small business and property owners including business plan review, assistance with marketing, and administers the City of Florence Downtown Redevelopment Grant and Facade Grant programs in qualifying incentive zones. Local incentives include:

- City of Florence Redevelopment Grant
- City of Florence Irby Street Corridor Improvement Grant
- City of Florence Facade Grant
- City of Florence Design Grant
- City of Florence Sign Grant
- Conditional Grant Agreements
- Utility Incentives (H-1 Only)
- Business License Credit (H-1 Only)
- FDDC Microenterprise Loan Program (MELP)

Florence Downtown Development Corporation

The Downtown Development Office manages the daily operations of the Florence Downtown Development Corp. (FDDC), a 501c3 non-profit that hosts many downtown street festivals and events, including the award-winning South Carolina Pecan Music and Food Festival and Florence After Five concert series. FDDC also coordinates all downtown promotions and image marketing for the district.

Tax Increment Financing District

Downtown Florence is within a Tax Increment Finance District (TIF). TIFs capture the increased tax value after a property's redevelopment, allocating funds for public improvement projects like streetscapes, road upgrades, and public gathering spaces within the Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1).

THE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR HISTORIC REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. It is one of the four treatment approaches outlined under The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. These overarching Standards provide a framework for preserving, rehabilitating, restoring, and reconstructing historic properties and guide decision-making at all levels of government and the private sector.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation, a subset of this broader framework, were developed by the U.S. Department of the Interior to guide federal agencies in managing historic properties and districts under their jurisdiction.

These standards not only guide federal agencies but also serve as the standard for evaluating a COA application. When evaluating project proposals, City staff and the DRB rely on these standards and the "local" Downtown Design Standards, while also considering the specific context and character of each individual property.

The standards outlined address common issues that the DRB frequently encounters, but the Board acknowledges that every historic property in Florence has unique qualities. In certain cases, exceptions to the adopted standards and policies may be warranted. It is the responsibility of the property owner to demonstrate to the DRB why an exception should be granted.

To deny an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the DRB must determine that the proposed project violates one or more of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation.

The list cites the standards verbatim.

1. A property shall be used for its historical 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 property shall be preserved



Florence City Center

Source: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/treatment-standards-rehabilitation.htm>; <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/secretary-standards-treatment-historic-properties.htm>

6. Deteriorated historic features should be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary, the new feature must match the original in design, color, texture, and visual qualities, and where possible, use the same materials. Missing features should be replaced based on documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historical 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 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.



Rehabilitated Historic Waters Building | Municipal Association of South Carolina

Case Study

DOWNTOWN BUILDING RENOVATION

Hotel Florence

The renovation of Hotel Florence, located at 126 W. Evans Street, is an excellent example of downtown building rehabilitation. Completed in 2013, the project restored one of Downtown Florence's oldest structures using both state and federal historic tax credits as well as abandoned building tax credits. The renovation involved removing vinyl siding from the front, uncovering the building's original brick facade, and re-exposing previously hidden windows. Spanning three interconnected buildings, the boutique hotel now offers 48 guest rooms, a fine dining restaurant (Victors), a fitness room, a spa, and a business center. Many original materials were repurposed throughout the 36,000-square-foot space, highlighting the building's historical character.



127 W Evans St Renovation | Trulia, SC Picture Project

REVIEW PROCESS

LEVELS OF REVIEW

There are two different levels of review of downtown projects—major and minor. Depending on the complexity of the project, the review will be conducted either by City staff or by the Design Review Board (DRB). Minor projects or alterations are handled by City staff, however should Staff deem it necessary, they have the right to engage the DRB. Major projects are directly referred to the DRB. If any portion of a project requires a major review, then the entire project is subject to the major review process. To determine what level of review a project entails, see the **Levels of Review Table**.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is a document certifying that a project within a locally designated historic district meets the standards outlined in state and local law for such work. A COA is issued by the DRB for major projects in historic districts or major projects on properties listed in the Local or National Register of Historic Places. A COA may be issued administratively by staff for minor projects that meet the design standards. Projects must also comply with the underlying zoning in the UDO and design standards.

SUBMITTAL PROCESS

PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETING

This is a preliminary meeting among City staff and the Applicant. During this meeting, City staff will inform the applicant what Downtown District their project is in, and the associated tier. City staff will review the development process with the applicant

to determine whether the proposed project is a Major or Minor Project, and if a COA will be required. The applicant is not required to bring any material to this preliminary meeting, however City staff will be able to provide more feedback if preliminary site concepts are provided.

Certificate of Appropriateness Process

Upon receiving an application for a COA, City staff will review the application material to ensure that adequate information has been submitted to evaluate the proposal. If additional information is needed or if there is question about some part of the material, City staff may contact the applicant for clarification or additional information. Once all the necessary information is in place, staff will determine whether the COA can be approved administratively or if it requires review by the DRB.

GENERAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All proposals will require a completed, signed application form, and most will require photos and drawings with details based on project scope.

SITE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

For projects such as new construction, building additions, parking plans, major landscaping, or similar proposals, applicants must provide City staff with a detailed and scaled site plan of the property.

Site plans must be scaled or dimensioned from measurements of the site, not from estimates, and include all appropriate information, such as:

- Existing features (buildings, trees, driveways, signs, fences, HVAC units, dumpsters, sidewalks, etc.)
- Setbacks (side, front, and rear)
- Features to be removed or added
- Accurate dimensions of site features
- Fence and wall heights
- Parking requirements, buffers, and screening

Consult with City staff to determine if site plans are required with your application and if your project is eligible for administrative approval.

Site plans will be used by City staff and/or the Design Review Board to determine whether or not project proposals meet the terms of the Downtown Design Standards, Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), and current policies and regulations.

An application is considered complete upon submission of items required by the Planning Director to understand the full scope of the project. The application should include:

- Site plans (including water/sewer connections, grading, drainage, right-of-way encroachments)
- Building elevations
- Materials list and color samples
- Scope of work
- Additional supporting materials

ELEVATION REQUIREMENTS

City staff will work with applicants to determine if detailed elevation drawings are required to adequately evaluate an application.

- Submit black-and-white line drawings, sized no larger than 24" x 36".

- Provide all supporting illustrations and photographs in an electronic format.
- Elevations must be to scale, clearly labeled, and accurately reflect grading on all sides.
- Identify all materials on the drawings and submit elevations for every side of the structure impacted by the proposed work.
- Include photos or brochures for specific materials, such as replacement windows, if applicable.
- Provide photos of the existing elevation, showing its relationship to surrounding structures and the public realm.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Depending on the type of project, the following items may be required:

- Architectural, landscape, demolition, signage, and exterior lighting plans
- Photos or perspective drawings showing relationships to adjacent structures and spaces
- Photographs of historic structures

Other construction details, life safety information, a Certificate of Zoning Compliance, and water/sewer fee payments may also be required by the Florence Building Department before a permit is issued.

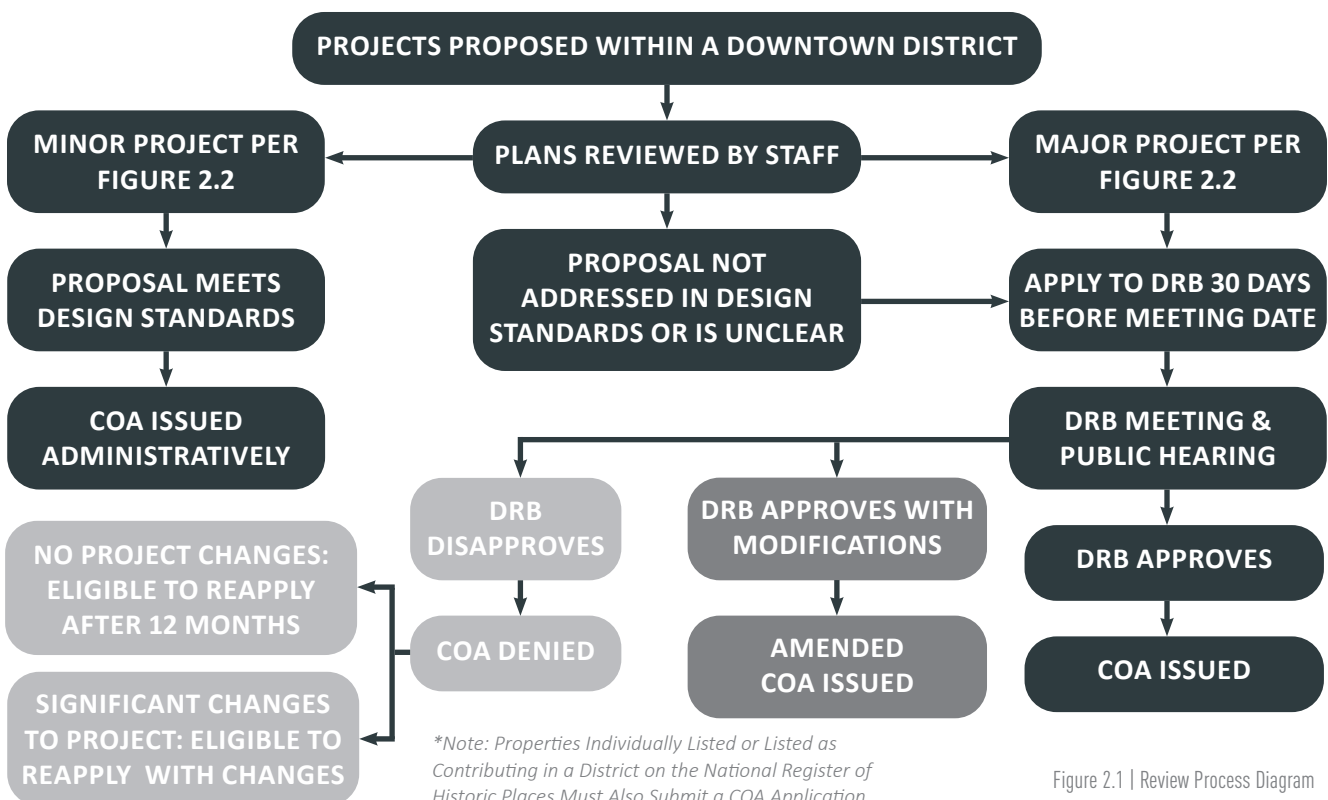


Figure 2.1 | Review Process Diagram

LEVELS OF REVIEW FOR PROJECTS WITHIN DOWNTOWN FLORENCE

TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED	MINOR STAFF APPROVAL	MAJOR* DRB APPROVAL
Exterior Changes - Building		
Awnings	●	
Chimneys (Alterations or removal of primary or street facing)	●	
Chimneys (Alterations or removal of damaged or unstable secondary chimneys)	●	
Enclosure of Existing Porches		●
Front Facade Windows and Doors	●	●
Gutters	●	
Handicap Access Facilities (On rear and side elevations)	●	
Masonry & Additions (Infill of existing opening and/or insertion of new openings)	●	●
Mechanical Units	●	
Non-Traditional Exterior Materials		●
Painting Masonry (previously unpainted)		●
Porch Rails	●	
Relocation of Principal Building		●
Roofing (Change in original materials)		●
Roofing (Replacement with materials same as existing)	●	
Shutters (New and replacement)	●	●
Signage	●	●
Storm Windows and Doors	●	
Windows and Doors (Changes to window and door openings on rear and side elevations not substantially visible from the street)	●	
Demolition		
Accessory Buildings (Dilapidated and in the rear yard)	●	
Principal Buildings		●
New Construction - Accessory Buildings and Structures		
Accessory Buildings (In the rear yard; small one-story sheds for storage that are not garages or accessory dwelling units)	●	
Accessory Structures (In the rear yard; decks, pergolas, swimming pools, etc.)	●	

Note: Items marked with an "●" in both columns are classified as either major or minor projects based on the scope of work; the classification depends on the specifics of the proposed activities.

Figure 2.2 | Levels of Review Table

LEVELS OF REVIEW FOR PROJECTS WITHIN DOWNTOWN FLORENCE		
TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED	MINOR STAFF APPROVAL	MAJOR* DRB APPROVAL
New Construction and Additions - Principal Buildings		
Additions (Neither wider nor taller than the primary structure, increase square footage of original structure by less than 50%, and/or not substantially visible from public right-of-way)	●	
Additions (Increase square footage of original structure more than 50% and substantially visible from public right-of-way)		●
New Construction (Principal Buildings)		●
Garages and Accessory Dwelling Units (Not substantially visible from public right-of-way and clearly secondary to the primary structure)	●	
Rehabilitation		
Rehabilitation Projects		●
Repair and Maintenance		
Masonry Cleaning, Repair, and/or Repointing	●	
Repair and Maintenance of Exterior Building Elements	●	
Sandblasting		●
Surface Cleaning	●	
Site Work		
Backflow Preventers with Screening	●	
Fences	●	
Landscaping	●	
Mechanical Units with Screening	●	
Parging (Previously parged surfaces and new parging)	●	
Parking Areas, Paving, and Driveways	●	
Rear Yard Parking Plans for Non-Residential Uses	●	
Retaining Walls	●	
Tree Removal	●	
Walkways (Change in size, location, etc.)	●	

Figure 2.3 | Levels of Review Table

**Note: If any part of a project requires a major review, then the entire project is subject to the major review process.*

SECTION 03

THE STANDARDS



Evans Streetscape | True Light Photography

DESIGN STANDARDS

A GUIDING FRAMEWORK

The Standards provide a framework for community expectations on new construction, additions, and renovations in Downtown Florence. They ensure development aligns with each district's context, urban design principles, and overall character. Serving as a resource for City staff, property owners, businesses, and developers, the Standards outline expectations for Site Design, Building Design, and Public Realm improvements, ensuring each project enhances Downtown Florence.

SITE DESIGN

Site Design standards provide specific standards for future development as they relate to building placement, height, and massing.

Additional site design standards related to open space, stormwater management, and parking are also discussed. These standards are important in ensuring future development complies with the district's character.

BUILDING DESIGN

Building Design standards speak to the architectural character of the downtown districts and provide recommendations on facade design as well as various building elements such as entry, windows, roofs, doorways, ground floors, and materials. Special emphasis is placed on ground floor activation as it is vital within downtown pedestrian-oriented districts.

PUBLIC REALM

Public Realm standards address shared downtown community spaces such as public streets, sidewalks, parks, and plazas. The goal is to create vibrant public realms that foster community interaction and engagement.



Figure 3.1 | Framework Diagram

SITE DESIGN

FROM BUILDING AND PARKING PLACEMENT TO OPEN SPACES AND LANDSCAPING, SITE DESIGN PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN SHAPING THE LOOK AND FEEL OF DOWNTOWN.

FRONTAGE TYPES

Frontages refer to the portion of a lot or building facade that faces a public street or public space. Setback and build-to lines are determined based on the specific type of frontage, ensuring that the building's placement and orientation contribute to a cohesive streetscape and public realm.

PRIMARY

The main frontage along a downtown street, or along a public open space such as a park or plaza.

SECONDARY

The frontage on other downtown streets that are not designated as primary.

OTHER

Alleys shall not be considered primary frontage.

LOTS WITH MULTIPLE FRONTAGES

In cases of when a lot has multiple frontages, at least one frontage must be designated as primary.

- A corner lot with two street frontages must designate a primary frontage to ensure the building's strong presence along the main street while appropriately addressing the secondary street.



Figure 3.2 | Open Space Primary Frontage

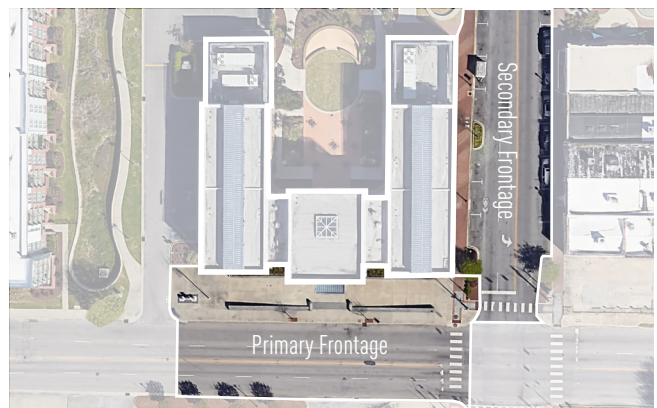


Figure 3.3 | Primary & Secondary Frontage Along Downtown Street



Figure 3.4 | Alleys Are Not Considered a Primary Frontage

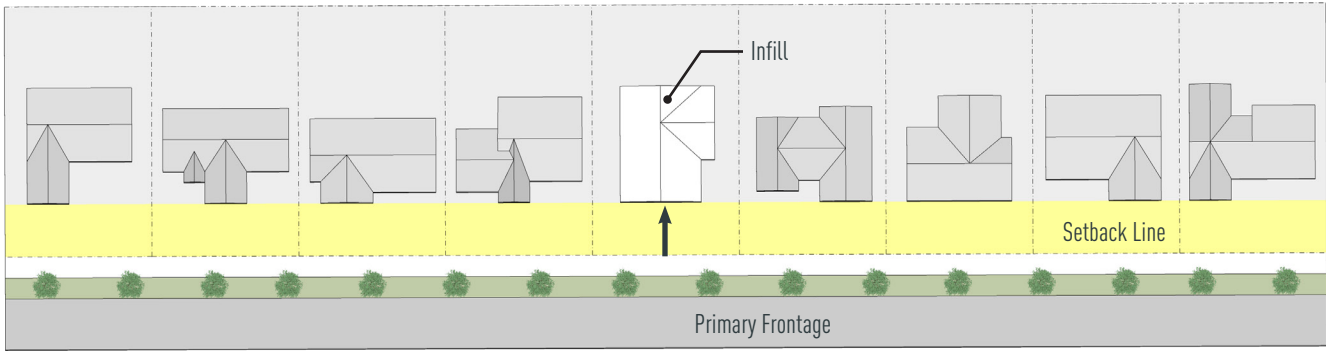


Figure 3.5 | Timrod Park Infill Residential

BUILDING PLACEMENT

Buildings define the physical form and character of downtown, influencing the streetscape and the overall urban experience. Typically, in a downtown, retail buildings are located at the edge of the sidewalk, while residential, institutional and civic buildings are set further back. Standards for building placement, which are also found in the [UDO](#), are determined by residential or non-residential development, with specific requirements for the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1).

RESIDENTIAL

Setbacks

Setbacks refer to the minimum required distance between a building structure and a lot line, ensuring adequate spacing and separation between properties and the public right-of-way.

Setbacks are applied to single-family residential properties, defining how far homes must be offset from the front, sides, and rear of a lot.

Single-family residential development is subject to the following setbacks: 10'-25' front setback, 5' minimum side setback, and 20' rear setback.

- For non-residential properties adjacent to residential parcels, side and rear setbacks are required to respect the privacy of the adjacent residential.

- In the Tier III - Timrod Park Residential District (D-4), infill development should align with the established building setbacks of adjacent properties to preserve the district's cohesive character and ensure consistency in the streetscape.

NON-RESIDENTIAL

Build-To Lines

Build-to lines refer to the designated distance from a lot line where the front facade of a building must be located. These lines help create a consistent building alignment along the street, promoting a strong street presence and a pedestrian-oriented environment. Unlike setbacks, which typically establish minimum distances, build-to lines define the maximum allowable distance a building can be set back.

Build-to lines apply to all non-residential parcels, including commercial, civic, and institutional uses.

In the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1), build-to lines are determined by existing conditions, with buildings generally constructed directly on the front property line (0' build-to line). New non-residential developments must maintain this 0' build-to line to reinforce the historic urban fabric.

For non-residential development in Tiers I-IV, primary structures must adhere to a 0'-10' build-to line. Portions of the facade recessed to accommodate front entrances may be set back up to three feet from the designated build-to line. Direct access to the building from the sidewalk is required.

Source: <https://online.encodeplus.com/regs/florence-sc/index.aspx>

All buildings shall meet these requirements, except under the following conditions:

- Where there is an existing public sidewalk adjacent to the development, the building must be set back to provide additional space on the private lot to extend the sidewalk.
- The new sidewalk must match the width of the existing sidewalk or be at least eight feet wide, whichever is greater. The building must then be constructed within 0'-10' feet from the back edge of the sidewalk provided on the private lot.
 - » For the Food Artisan Warehouse District (W-1), the building shall be constructed to a build-to line that is coterminous with the edge of the sidewalk that is provided on the private lot.
- If an existing building exceeds farther back than the designated build-to line, the building may:
 - » Remain in its current location, utilizing the front build-to line as a public yard, plaza, courtyard, or outdoor service area (e.g., outdoor seating for a restaurant, outdoor display area for a retail store); or
 - » Be extended up to the build-to line provided that it is a conforming use and complies with the requirements for providing additional sidewalk space described above.
- If the average setback of buildings along the block front, or along one or both fronts in the case of a corner lot, is greater than the designated build-to line, the building may be:
 - » Constructed at the build-to line; or
 - » Set back to match the average front setback along the same side of the same street segment in the same zoning district, provided that the lot proposed for development or redevelopment is not counted in the calculation.

		TIER I		TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V	
		D-1		D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1	
FRONTAGE & BUILDING PLACEMENT	Frontage Types	Primary & Secondary If Applicable		Primary & Secondary If Applicable		Primary Only	Primary & Secondary If Applicable		Primary & Secondary If Applicable	
	Setbacks for Residential Development	A	Front: 10-25'		Front: 10-25'		Front: 10-25'	Front: 10-25'		Front: 0'
		B	Side: 5' Min.		Side: 5' Min.		Side: 5' Min.	Side: 5' Min.		Side: None
		C	Rear: 20' Min.		Rear: 20' Min.		Rear: 20' Min.	Rear: 20' Min.		Rear: None
		D	Build-To %: 60% Min.		Build-To %: 60% Min.		Build-To %: 60% Min.	Build-To %: 60% Min.		Build-To %: 80% Min.
	Setbacks for Non-Residential Development	A	Front: 0-10'		Front: 0-10'		Front: 0-10'	Front: 0-10'	Front: 0'	Front: 0'
		B	Side: None; If Abutting Single-Family Property: 10' Min.		Side: None; If Abutting Single-Family Property: 10' Min.		Side: None; If Abutting Single-Family Property: 10' Min.	Side: None; If Abutting Single-Family Property: 10' Min.		Side: None
		C	Rear: None; If Abutting Single-Family Property: 10' Min.		Rear: None; If Abutting Single-Family Property: 10' Min.		Rear: None; If Abutting Single-Family Property: 10' Min.	Rear: None; If Abutting Single-Family Property: 10' Min.		Rear: None
		D	Build-To Percent: 70% Min.		Build-To Percent: 70% Min.		Build-To Percent: 70% Min.	Build-To Percent: 70% Min.		Build-To Percent: 80% Min.

Figure 3.6 | Frontage & Building Placement Table

- Buildings may be set back up to a distance of 20 feet from the build-to line in order to provide a designated public plaza or outdoor service area according to the following standards:
 - » The public plaza or outdoor service area shall be designated upon development approval and maintained as a publicly accessible space.
 - » Any service uses that take place in the designated setback area must directly relate to the activity of the primary ground floor use (e.g. outdoor seating for a restaurant, outdoor display area for a retail store, etc.).
 - » When the area is not being used as an outdoor service area, it shall remain generally accessible to the public and function as an extension of the public sidewalk environment.

BUILD-TO PERCENTAGE

The build-to percentage defines the portion of a lot's frontage that must be occupied by the building facade.

- For properties in Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1), buildings should ideally occupy 100% of the lot frontage to ensure continuity with the historic streetscape. Where constraints exist, the minimum build-to percentage must still meet or exceed 80%, consistent with district standards.
- The goal for new development across all uses and tiers is for buildings to fully occupy the street frontage to enhance the pedestrian experience and strengthen the urban character of downtown. However, it is understood that meeting the minimum build-to percentage may be necessary in some cases due to parking and driveway access.
- Developments with less than 100 feet of frontage are limited to one driveway or drive aisle, while those with more than 100 feet may have up to two.

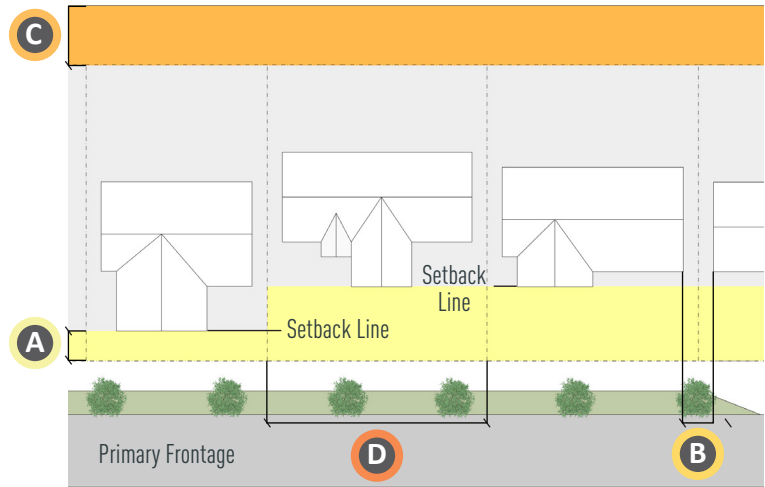


Figure 3.7 | Single-Family Residential Setbacks

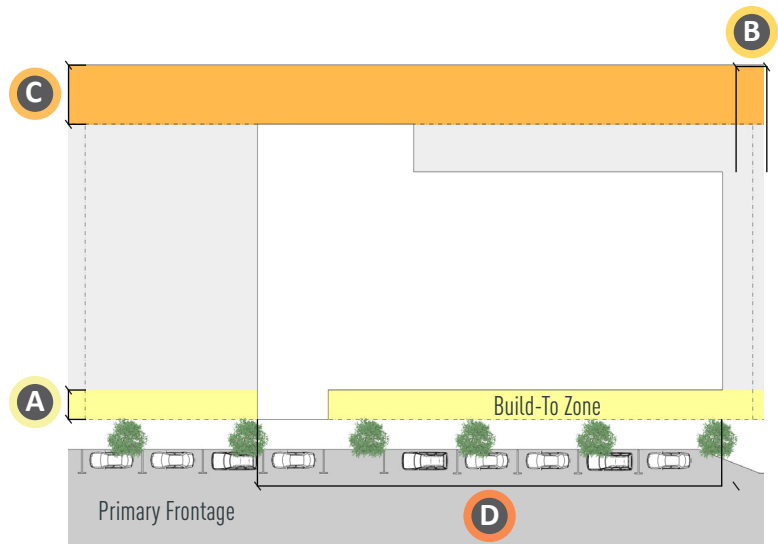


Figure 3.8 | Non-Residential Setbacks

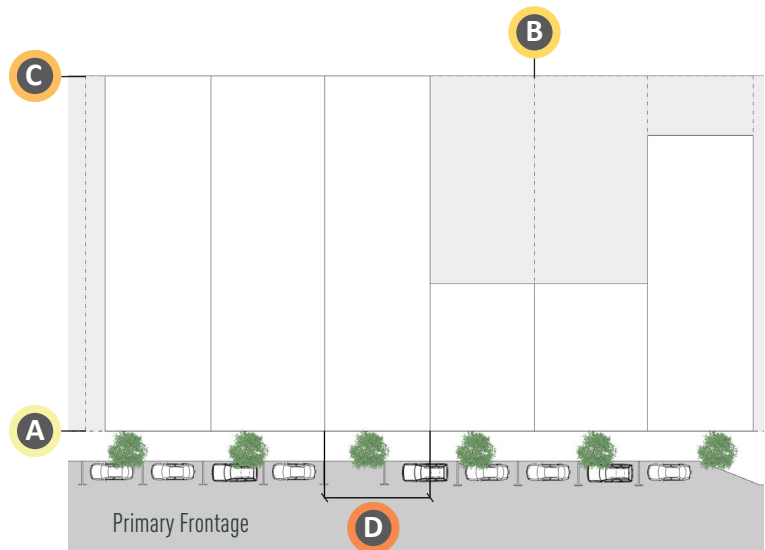


Figure 3.9 | Downtown Historic District (H-1) Setbacks

BUILDING HEIGHT

Building height defines the scale and character of downtown. Height standards are established to prevent disproportionate development, and preserve downtown's overall character.

Building heights in downtown vary across the different tiers, each with specific minimum and maximum limits. In Tiers II, IV, and V, buildings may be up to six stories. In Tier I, buildings are only allowed up to three stories to provide for a more moderate transition to surrounding residential neighborhoods. In Tier III, the maximum building height is two-story as it is a historic single-family residential neighborhood.

TIER TRANSITIONS

When new development occurs next to a district with a lower height maximum, the building height should respect the adjacent district's maximum height limit for the first 50 feet of building width. This transitional approach ensures that new development does not dominate neighboring buildings.

- The height of buildings in the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1) should be sensitive to the context in which the structure is to be built.
- New infill structures should be complimentary in scale to the existing buildings located to the left and right of the proposed development.

HEIGHT STEPBACK

Height stepbacks are required within the Downtown Districts to ensure that the mass and scale of new development align with the existing character of Downtown Florence. Stepbacks are measured from the front facade of the building.

REAR AND SIDE STEPBACKS

For new development constructed adjacent to residentially zoned properties or historic structures, the building height should not exceed a one-story differential for the first 50' of building width along the shared property line.

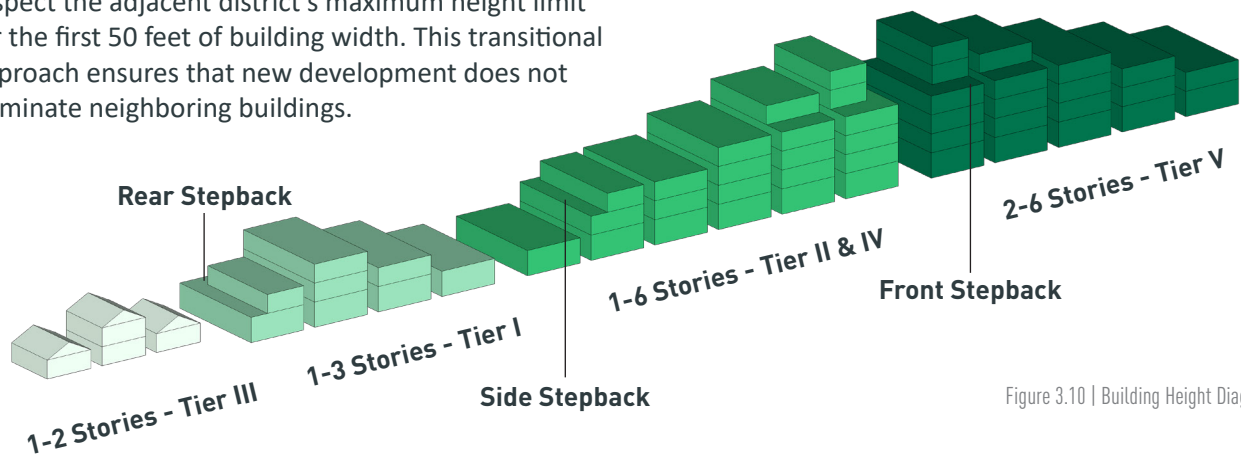


Figure 3.10 | Building Height Diagram

BUILDING HEIGHT & STEPBACK	TIER I	TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V
	D-1	D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1
Building Height	1-3 Stories	1-6 Stories		1-2 Stories	1-6 Stories		2-6 Stories
Front Stepbacks	Not Required	Height Above 4 Stories Requires A 10' Min. Stepback		Not Required	Height Above 4 Stories Requires A 10' Min. Stepback		Height Above 4 Stories Requires A 10' Min. Stepback
Side Stepbacks	Not Required, Unless Next To Residential Properties	Not Required, Unless Next To Residential Properties		Not Required	Not Required, Unless Next To Residential Properties		Required, If It Has A Secondary Frontage
Rear Stepbacks	Not Required, Unless Next To Residential Properties	Not Required, Unless Next To Residential Properties		Not Required	Not Required, Unless Next To Residential Properties		Required, If Backing An Alley

Figure 3.11 | Building Height and Stepback Table

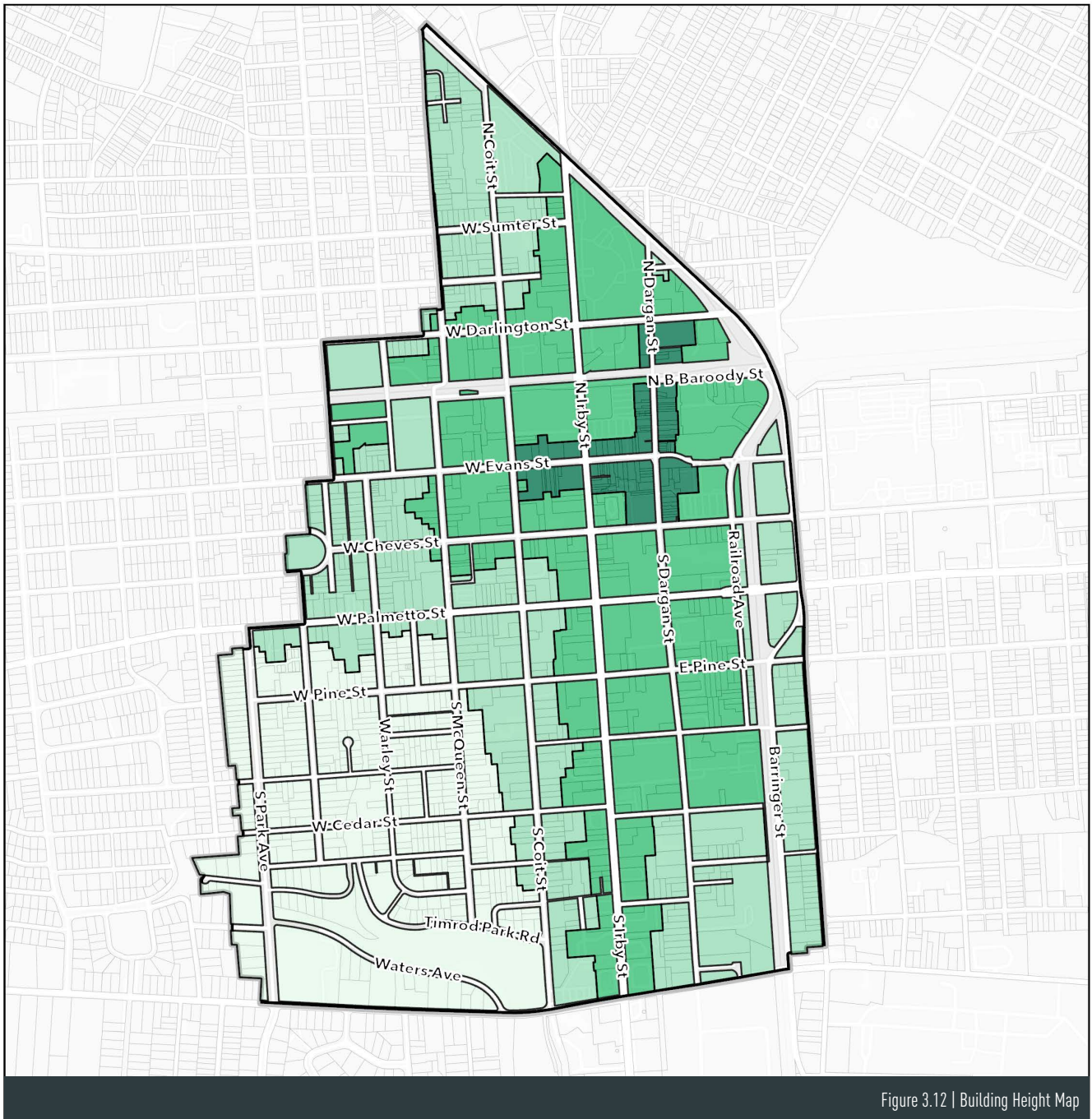








Figure 3.12 | Building Height Map

-  Downtown Boundary
-  Parcels
-  1-2 Stories (Tier III)
-  1-3 Stories (Tier I)
-  1-6 Stories (Tier II & IV)
-  2-6 Stories (Tier V)



ON-SITE OPEN SPACE

All new and existing development, excluding those in Tier III and Tier V, must provide on-site open space, with exceptions for parcels smaller than one-fourth acre. The required open space amount and type are determined by the development's designated tier, ensuring that each project contributes appropriately to downtown's overall livability and character.

On-site open space percentage represents the proportion of a development site that must be dedicated to open areas. Tier III and Tier V have a 0% minimum, Tier I has a 10% minimum, and Tier II and Tier IV have a 15% minimum.

For the table below, a closed circle (●) indicates that a particular type of open space is preferred; meanwhile, an open circle (○) indicates that a particular type of open space is permitted but not required.

ON-SITE OPEN SPACE TYPES

- **Plazas:** Paved public spaces near urban buildings featuring gathering areas, landscaping, seating, and occasionally shops or cafes
- **Courtyards:** Open areas enclosed by buildings or walls, offering a semi-private space for relaxation or small gatherings
- **Greens:** Small urban parks covered with grass and/or trees, providing a natural, serene setting
- **Patios & Balconies:** Private or semi-private outdoor spaces attached to buildings
- **Pocket Parks:** Mini parks nestled between buildings
- **Linear Parks:** Long, narrow parks that connect landmarks, neighborhoods, or greens
- **Greenways:** Shared-use path corridor accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists
- **Outdoor Amenities and/or Recreation Spaces:** Areas dedicated to recreational or outdoor activity, such as playgrounds and sports facilities
- **Outdoor Dining:** Outdoor arrangement of furnishings intended for eating and drinking
- **Rooftops:** Open terrace space on top of buildings

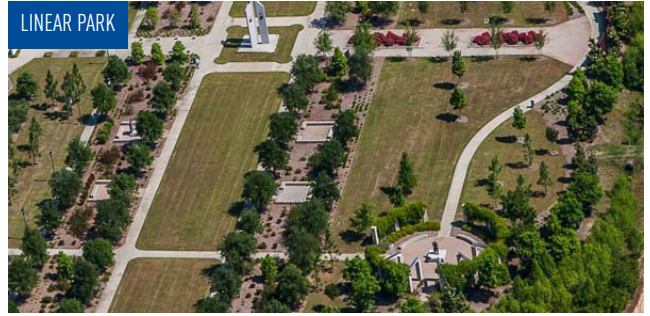
		TIER I		TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V
		D-1	D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1	
ON-SITE OPEN SPACE	On-Site Open Space Percentage	10% Min.	15% Min.		0% Min.	15% Min.		0% Min.	
	Plazas	●	●		○	●		○	
	Courtyards	●	●		○	●		○	
	Greens	●	●		○	●		○	
	Patios & Balconies	●	●		○	●		○	
	Pocket Parks	●	●		○	●		○	
	Linear Parks	●	○		○	●		○	
	Greenways	●	○		○	●		○	
	Outdoor Amenities and/or Recreation Spaces	●	●		○	●		○	
	Outdoor Dining	●	●		○	●		○	
	Rooftops	●	●		○	●		○	

Note: In the table above: ● indicates preferred, ○ indicates permitted but not required, and X indicates not allowed.

Figure 3.13 | On-Site Open Space Table



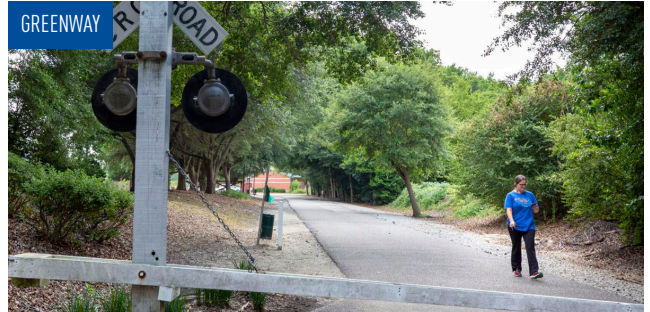
Downtown Florence James Allen Plaza | True Light Photography



Florence Veterans Park | Benton Henry, SC Picture Project



Hotel Florence Courtyard | Hotel Florence, Eat Drink Travel



Florence Rail Trail | Post & Courier



Francis Marion University | McMillan Pazdan Smith



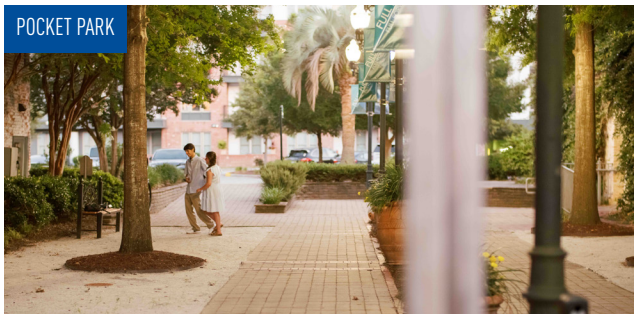
Griffin Plaza Splash Pad | JF Contractors



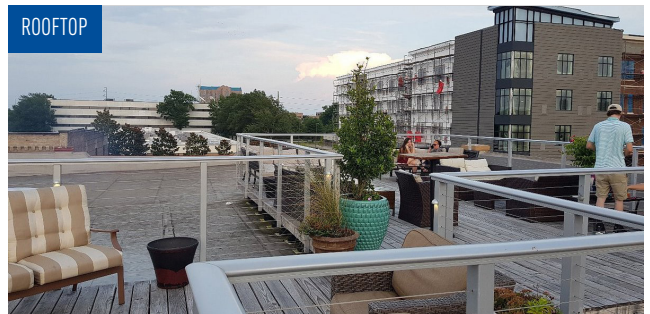
The Emerson | Apartments



Lula's Coffee Outdoor Dining | Yelp



Roy Adams Breezeway



The Dispensary Rooftop | Trip Advisor

OUTDOOR DINING

An outdoor dining area is a designated space located outside a building envelope, either on private property or within the public right-of-way. This space, including all associated structural elements, is designed to serve as an ancillary area for outdoor dining in connection with a nearby restaurant.

APPROVAL

Approval By Ordinance

Outdoor dining is permitted through the UDO, Division 3-8.2 Supplemental Nonresidential Standards.

Approved By Permit

COA

Any improvements, furniture, or other elements associated with outdoor dining must receive approval through the City's standard Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) process. This procedure ensures that all proposed modifications align with the City's design, safety, and functional standards, maintaining the visual and operational integrity of the area. The COA review will evaluate factors such as materials, layout, and adherence to applicable guidelines.

Encroachment Permit

For outdoor dining areas located within the public right-of-way, an encroachment permit is also required. Applicants must submit a detailed encroachment permit application that adheres to the City's submission requirements. The permit will be issued only after the proposal is reviewed and determined to meet all installation requirements outlined in the outdoor dining standards, as well as all other relevant guidelines, regulations, and laws. This includes compliance with public safety, accessibility, and aesthetic considerations to ensure the space serves its intended purpose while protecting the interests of the community.

PROHIBITED & RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

The following prohibitions and restrictions apply to all approvals for any outdoor dining area, whether granted by ordinance or permit:

- No use of the area for any purpose shall occur between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. the following morning in the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1).
- Seating must be provided for a minimum of eighty (80) percent of the occupant capacity of the outdoor dining area.
- No amplified music or other sound shall be provided anywhere in dining areas located in the public right-of-way. Dining areas on private property must adhere to the City of Florence noise ordinance requirements.
- No smoking or vaping shall occur in any outdoor dining area.
- No food shall be cooked on an open flame in any outdoor dining area.
- No outdoor dining area shall be occupied in excess of the maximum occupant load identified either in the permit issued pursuant to this section or established pursuant to other provision of law.
- Maintain minimum sidewalk width per ADA standards.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Notwithstanding the general prohibitions set forth in the UDO, the director of the Planning, Research, and Development Department, or the director's designee, is authorized to approve the placement or installation of structures allowing them to encroach in the public right-of-way for the purpose of creating an outdoor dining area. The director may establish reasonable requirements for the submission and review of a permit application, including but not limited to the proposed location, outdoor furniture specifications (material type, size, and color), and also shall require the following information from the applicant:

- Written documentation from the owner of the property where the restaurant affiliated with the outdoor dining area is located acknowledging no objection to the application.

- Outdoor dining areas requiring an encroachment permit or other City of Florence approvals must include written documentation confirming that all necessary permits and approvals have been obtained for lawful placement or installation
- Payment of any fee established by the City Council for the outdoor dining area shown in the application submittal.

STANDARDS

Design

- Furniture must be constructed from durable, commercial-grade materials and well-maintained, kept in good working order, and free of visible wear or damage.
- Outdoor furniture should complement the building's color, style, and materials. Neutral colors, such as black, white, or natural tones, are preferred to create a cohesive look, but alternatives may be considered on an individual basis.
- Furniture materials must be high-quality, durable, and weather-resistant, such as metal or outdoor-rated treated wood. Plastic furniture is prohibited.
- Umbrellas may not include graphics or text and should consist of solid color.

Location & Dimension

- Outdoor dining areas must not be located on a street with speed limits exceeding 35 mph.
- A minimum of 4 feet of unobstructed pedestrian access must be maintained around the dining area.
- The maximum allowable length of an outdoor dining area cannot exceed the width of the lot or storefront on which the affiliated restaurant is located.
- Nothing placed or constructed within the outdoor dining area may:
 - » Interfere with fire lanes, vehicular traffic, turning radii, or maneuvering zones.
 - » Negatively impact the health or stability of existing vegetation, including plantings and trees.
 - » Obstruct or impair safe emergency egress from any building.

Limited to One Area

- Each restaurant may only have one designated outdoor dining area.

Safety Measures

- Features of outdoor dining areas that pose hazards to pedestrian or vehicle traffic are prohibited.
- The permittee shall be responsible for maintaining all areas within the outdoor dining area and within ten (10) feet on all sides, other than the side facing the street, so as to keep such areas free of litter, refuse, and both solid and liquid waste. Outdoor dining areas are subject to existing codes related to property maintenance.
- The permittee must keep the area and its surroundings clean.
- The director of the Planning, Research and Development Department is expressly authorized to impose conditions designed to protect and promote public safety on any approved permit, including requiring the immediate removal of the outdoor dining area structure in order to accommodate special events, street or sidewalk repair work, or emergency conditions, and the permittee shall comply with all such conditions.
- The City reserves the right to remove dining areas for special events, repairs, or emergencies.



Dispensary Rooftop Bar | Florence Downtown Development Corp.

Alcohol Service Dining Guidelines

- Outdoor dining areas in the public right of way are limited to the sale/service of beer and wine only within the designated outdoor dining area. Establishments serving alcohol must be properly permitted by the South Carolina Department of Revenue for on-premise beer and wine sales. They must also maintain \$1,000,000 in liquor liability insurance coverage, naming the City of Florence as an additional insured when providing alcohol within the City. Alcohol service in outdoor dining areas on private property must follow South Carolina Department of Revenue on-premise consumption laws. Additional alcohol service restrictions include:
 - » Beer and wine must be served in non-glass materials if dining area is located in the public right of way.
 - » No liquor service may take place in dining areas located within the public right of way.
 - » No open container alcohol may leave the designated outdoor dining area.
 - » Alcohol may be consumed only by seated guests at permitted tables in the public right of way.

Expiration, Renewal, Insurance, & Removal

- No renewal request shall be granted unless all elements of the outdoor dining area comply with applicable guidelines and may still be denied at the City's discretion.
- Insurance required. Any person issued an encroachment permit for an outdoor dining area in the public right-of-way must maintain liability insurance with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 for bodily injury or death per incident and \$1,000,000 for property damage per incident. The policy must include the City of Florence as an additional insured. A certificate of insurance or policy endorsement from a licensed insurer in South Carolina must be provided to the City's risk manager after the permit is issued but before construction begins.
- Outdoor dining areas in the public right-of-way with an issued encroachment permit by the City of Florence must annually renew and provide an updated certificate of insurance naming the City of Florence as an additional insured to the Planning, Research, and Development Department.

- The permittee must remove all elements of the permitted outdoor dining area within three business days after permit expiration. All areas of pavement, sidewalk, landscaping, or other infrastructure that were altered as a result of the placement or installation must be repaired to match or exceed the quality of the previous installation condition, subject to approval to the City's Public Works Department. If not removed on time, the elements will be deemed abandoned, and the City may remove them, charging the permittee for all associated costs.

ON-SITE OUTDOOR DINING

On-site outdoor dining, located entirely on private property, can be placed in front, at the side or rear of buildings, or on rooftops. These areas should complement the building design and maintain accessibility and circulation. All outdoor dining design standards, including furniture and umbrellas, apply.

In Front of Building

- Outdoor dining may be placed between the public right-of-way and the building facade for new developments.
- Existing buildings may locate outdoor dining within the 0-20' build-to zone. If a property has a 0' build-to line, consult the standards for development within the public right-of-way.
- Dining should not obstruct access to entrances, exits, or pedestrian pathways and may encroach up to 10' into the Building Zone.
- Ensure a minimum of 6' of unobstructed sidewalk width to maintain pedestrian movement.
- Define the dining area with low-profile barriers like planters or railings (30-36" high) while keeping it visually open and inviting.

Behind or Side of Building

- Rear or side outdoor dining should have direct access from the building interior and be screened from parking or service areas with landscaping or decorative fencing. These spaces should include clear access points and safety lighting.

Rooftop Dining

- Rooftop dining should ensure safety and comfort with guardrails, shade structures, and lighting.
- Furnishings must be stable and secure, and access must meet building codes with proper exit routes.

OUTDOOR DINING ON PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

Outdoor dining in the public right-of-way includes sidewalk areas, parklets, and bulb-outs.

On Sidewalk

- Outdoor dining is permitted within the Building Zone and may encroach into the Pedestrian Zone as long as 6 feet of clear sidewalk is maintained.
- Align furniture parallel to the facade and within the business's frontage.
 - » If the sidewalk is too narrow for outdoor dining in the Building Zone, consider using parklets or bulb-outs for dining.

Parklets

- Parklets convert on-street parking into small dining areas with seating, tables, and greenery.
- They must be modular, removable, and include barriers like planters or railings to separate them from vehicular traffic.
- City approval is required, and parklets must not block fire hydrants, utilities, or other essential infrastructure.

Dining on Bulb-Outs

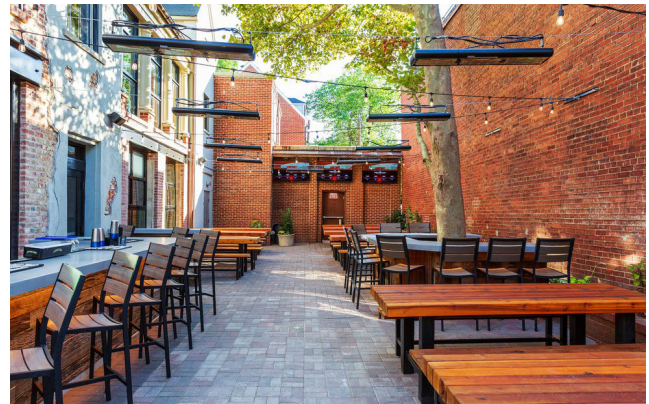
- Bulb-out dining areas utilize sidewalk extensions at intersections or mid-block crossings.
- Dining setups should avoid blocking pedestrian traffic and use low-profile barriers.
- Maintain visibility for drivers and pedestrians when including amenities like umbrellas and planters to enhance the dining experience as well as ensure the safety of customers.



Outdoor Dining on Parklet in Savannah, GA | Savannah Morning News



Outdoor Dining on Sidewalk in Asheville, NC | Isa's Bistro



Outdoor Dining Behind Building in Alexandria, VA | Alexandria Living Magazine



Outdoor Bar in Front of Building at Bird's Nest | SC Now

SCREENING

GENERAL SCREENING STANDARDS

Screening elements may include fences, walls, hedges, landscaping, buffer areas, or a combination thereof, designed to establish a visual separation between different uses. Screening can be placed along property lines or elsewhere on a site, based on its purpose. Existing vegetation within the screening area may also be used to meet these requirements.

PARKING

Parking areas must incorporate landscaping and physical barriers to reduce visual impact:

- Perimeter parking lot landscape areas shall be a minimum of five feet in width adjacent to parking spaces, street frontages, and travel areas.
- Large maturing trees shall be planted no more than 40 feet on center.
- A continuous row or staggered row of evergreen shrubs, with a minimum mature height of 3 feet, shall be installed no more than 6 feet on center. If used in addition to a wall or fence, the evergreen shrubs should be installed on the exterior of such features.
- A masonry wall, garden hedge, or approved fencing material shall be installed along any street frontage adjacent to parking areas. The landscaping shall be installed on the outside of the wall or fence.
- Where commercial uses abut residential areas, install a 6' masonry wall or approved wooden fence to screen parking and service areas.
- Structured parking decks not wrapped with buildings should include a 15 foot wide landscape area filled with shrubs, mature trees, and groundcovers.
- The parking structure should include three of the following architectural features on the primary frontage side for screening purposes: awnings, overhangs, canopies, decorative screens, grills, louvers, or other similar features.
- Where parking areas is two bays or more in size, a 10' setback with trees is also required.

UTILITIES

Screening Standards for Utilities

- All utilities shall be located to the side or rear of the structure, unless placed within the structure or on the roof.
- All on-site utilities must be screened on three sides by a solid fence, wall, or hedge row.
- Walls or fences used for screening should be one foot taller than the items being screened.
- Hedge rows must be planted to create a visual barrier and should reach a height of one foot taller than the utility within three years of maturity.
- Utility boxes may be wrapped or designed with artwork on all sides as an alternative to traditional screening.

Mechanical Equipment

- Mechanical equipment, such as HVAC units, must be screened from public view.
- Equipment may be located on a building, roof, ground, or at the side or rear of building but must adhere to screening requirements.

Utility Meters & Transformers

- Utility meters/transformers must be hidden from public view using approved screening methods.

Storage Areas & Solid Waste Containers

- Storage areas, dumpsters, and compactors must be located at rear or side of building and must be screened to reduce visual impact.

Generators

- Generators and similar features must be screened on three sides for visual integration.

SERVICE AREAS

Service areas, loading facilities, and drive-through areas should be located out of view from primary or secondary frontages, parks, or public spaces:

- Use a 75% opaque wall or fence and/or 6'-8' high landscape screening to hide loading areas from streets and frontages.
- Maintain required setbacks along side and rear property lines.
- Service areas, such as loading docks, trash receptacles, and mechanical equipment, should

be screened from public view. In high-density areas, dumpsters should be consolidated to serve multiple businesses. Enclosures near buildings should match the building materials and completely block views. Those farther from buildings may use approved masonry, decorative metal, or wood fencing.

- Dumpsters and recycling containers must be enclosed on three sides by a wall, fence, or landscaping at least 75% opaque, 1'-2' taller than the container, with a gated enclosure on the fourth side.
- Storage areas for vehicles, equipment, or materials must use a masonry wall, hedge, or fence of sufficient height and density to block street-level views.
- Drive-through windows should be positioned at the rear or side of buildings or screened from street view, with access and egress designed to minimize disruption to pedestrian flow.

RECOMMENDED SCREENING & FENCING MATERIALS

For a cohesive and attractive appearance, the following materials are recommended, depending on tiers and application. See the **Parking, Landscape, Stormwater, and Screening Table** for specific details.

- Brick
- Split-face block
- Double-staggered row of approved plant material to form and be maintained as a hedge
- Landscaped beds with appropriate maintenance
- Masonry piers and low foundation walls with metal pickets (for parking areas only)
- Metal pickets in dark colors, with or without masonry piers/foundation walls (for perimeter and parking areas, not storage areas)
- Approved wooden privacy fencing (backyards only)
- Poured concrete or light stucco finish block

To maintain visual quality, the following materials are prohibited:

- Chain link (except temporarily at construction sites or where not visible from the street)
- Split rail, stockade, wooden picket, or other suburban/rural styles
- Prefabricated wooden fencing
- Unfinished concrete block or traditional stucco



Rooftop Screening | Sharchs



Mechanical Equipment Screening | BOK Modern



Existing Landscape and Fence Screening in Downtown. It Is Preferable to Have the Landscaping on the Outside of the Fencing.



Landscape and Wall Screening | City of Milwaukee, WI

LANDSCAPE & STORMWATER

LANDSCAPE

- Design landscaping, fencing, and retaining walls to be integrated into the site and its architecture.
- Utilize a diverse selection of native trees, shrubs, and ground covers to screen service areas, utilities, and parking lots.
- At street intersections within downtown, incorporate pedestrian bulbouts to reduce crossing distances, calm traffic, and increase pedestrian safety.
- Utilize these expanded areas for public amenities by integrating planters, monumentation, public art, and seating areas.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

- Underground stormwater detention should be utilized within the Downtown Districts versus surface detention facilities.
- Prioritize low-impact development (LID) strategies such as pervious paving materials, bioretention swales, and vegetated landscape islands within surface parking lots to facilitate natural stormwater infiltration, reduce runoff, and enhance site permeability.
- Incorporate innovative stormwater management techniques, such as bioretention systems within planting strips along secondary or non-primary streets. These green infrastructure elements filter stormwater, reduce flooding risks, support urban ecology, and enhance the pedestrian experience.



Landscaping Within Roy Adams Breezeway | Visit Florence



Landscaping Along Evans Street



Pervious Parking Paving | City of Warrenville, Illinois



Bioretention Planting Strip | City of Portland, OR



Roadside Rain Garden | City of Seattle, Washington

		TIER I	TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V
		D-1	D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1
MAXIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS	Single-Family Attached & Detached	No Limit	No Limit		No Limit	No Limit		No Limit
	Multi-Family	2 / bedroom	1 / bedroom		1 / bedroom	1 / bedroom		1 / bedroom
	Commercial	4 / 1,000 sf	3 / 1,000 sf		3 / 1,000 sf	3 / 1,000 sf		2 / 1,000 sf
	Civic	3 / 1,000 sf	2 / 1,000 sf		2 / 1,000 sf	2 / 1,000 sf		2 / 1,000 sf
	Open Space	No Limit	No Limit		No Limit	No Limit		No Limit
LANDSCAPE & STORMWATER	Landscaping*	10% Min. of Site Area Dedicated To Landscaping	15% Min. of Site Area Dedicated To Landscaping		No Requirement	15% Min. of Site Area Dedicated To Landscaping		No Requirement
	Stormwater Requirement**	Properties Over One Acre Require 50% On-Site Detention, With a Fee-In-Lieu Option for LID Measures	Properties Over One Acre Require 50% On-Site Detention, With a Fee-In-Lieu Option for LID Measures		No Requirement	Properties Over One Acre Require 50% On-Site Detention, With a Fee-In-Lieu Option for LID Measures		No Requirement
SCREENING & FENCING	Required Screening Uses**	Parking, Utilities, & Service Areas	Parking, Utilities, & Service Areas		Parking, Utilities, & Service Areas	Parking, Utilities, & Service Areas		Parking, Utilities, & Service Areas
	Allowable Screening Materials	Brick, Split-Face Block, Double Staggered Row of Approved Hedge, Landscaped Beds, Masonry Piers with Metal Pickets, Approved Wooden Privacy Fencing	Brick, Split-Face Block, Landscaped Beds, Hedges, or Metal Pickets with Masonry Piers		Wooden Privacy, Fencing, Hedges, Landscaped Beds, Dark Metal Pickets, or Brick	Brick, Split-Face Block, Landscaped Beds, Hedges, or Metal Pickets		Brick, Split-Face Block, Landscaped Beds, Hedges, or Metal Pickets with Masonry Piers

Figure 3.14 | Parking, Landscape, Stormwater, & Screening Table

Notes: *The percentage of the site area for landscaping can be included within designated open space.

** Single-Family Uses Excluded

PARKING

PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Parking lots shall not be a principal use within any Downtown District.

Minimum parking requirements are not provided in the UDO; however, each tier has specific maximum parking limits to prevent excessive parking and promote more efficient land use.

ON-STREET PARKING

- In downtown areas, on-street parking is the most relied-upon option, supporting businesses by providing convenient access and reducing the need for extensive off-street parking lots.
- It is strongly encouraged to maximize on-street parking.

SURFACE PARKING

Location

- Surface parking should be located at the rear or side of buildings, with access primarily from rear or side streets.
- Parking may also be located between buildings.
- Minimize parking access from main streets to enhance pedestrian safety and reduce vehicular conflicts.

Setbacks and Screening

- Parking areas must be set back at least five feet from all property lines.
- Incorporate tree islands and plantings at parking lot corners, with a ratio of one tree per 20 parking spaces, to soften the visual impact and provide shade.
- Trees should be compatible with nearby infrastructure.
- Existing parking in front of buildings should be removed or screened from the public right-of-way.

Lighting and Safety

- All parking areas must be well-lit to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- New and refurbished light fixtures must minimize light pollution by following Dark Sky guidelines, ensuring they direct light downward and reduce glare or unnecessary brightness.

Pedestrian Access

- Design considerations should include crosswalks, sidewalks, and other elements that facilitate safe movement within the parking area and direct access to public sidewalks and building entries.

Rear Entries and Passageways

- Attractive rear entries to businesses are encouraged.
- If residential units are located above commercial buildings, entrances adjacent to parking areas are required.
- Interior or exterior passageways connecting rear parking to primary streets shall be provided.

PARKING TYPES	TIER I	TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V
	D-1	D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1
On-Street	●	●		●	●		●
Surface	●	●		●	●		●
Structured	●	●		X	○		○
Shared	●	●		●	●		●

Figure 3.15 | Parking Types

Note: In the table above: ● indicates preferred, ○ indicates permitted but not required, and X indicates not allowed.

Driveway Consolidation

- Wherever possible, driveways should be consolidated or shared between adjacent properties to minimize curb cuts and reduce disruptions along pedestrian corridors.
- Driveways from main pedestrian corridors should be avoided, with rear or side access preferred.

STRUCTURED PARKING

- New parking structures are encouraged to be wrapped with appropriately scaled multi-family or mixed-use buildings to enhance the streetscape and promote active frontages.
- If structured parking is not wrapped with liner buildings, it should be set back and accompanied by public space and generous landscaping.
- New parking structures wrapped with liner buildings must include the following active uses:
 - » Primary Frontage: Active uses, such as retail, office, or residential spaces, must occupy at least 80% of the primary frontage length, excluding areas necessary for vehicular and pedestrian access, as well as utility uses.
 - » Secondary Frontage: Along any secondary frontage, active uses should cover a minimum of 60% of the ground floor length, excluding required egress and utility uses.

SHARED PARKING

- Shared parking is strongly encouraged to optimize land use and minimize the need for individual parking spaces.
- This approach reduces construction and maintenance costs, enhances the streetscape, and frees up space for additional green areas or development.
- Whenever possible, parking should be shared among multiple businesses or across all properties on a block.
- For commercial uses within the Downtown Districts, 5% of the total parking spaces should allow for public use during off-peak business hours.



Figure 3.16 | Surface Parking Configuration Behind Buildings

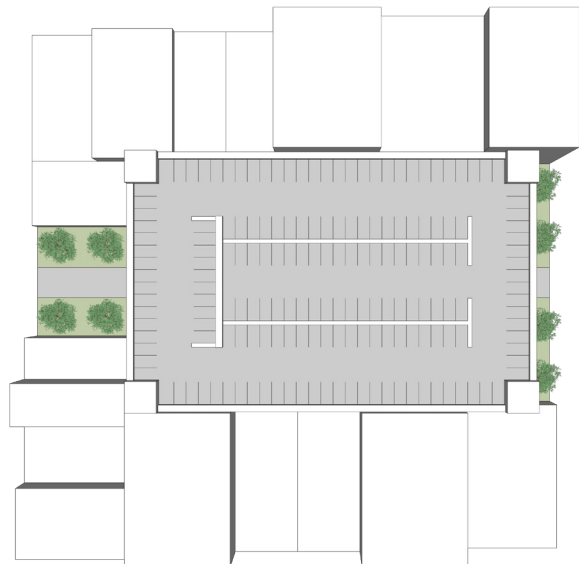


Figure 3.17 | Structured Parking Configuration

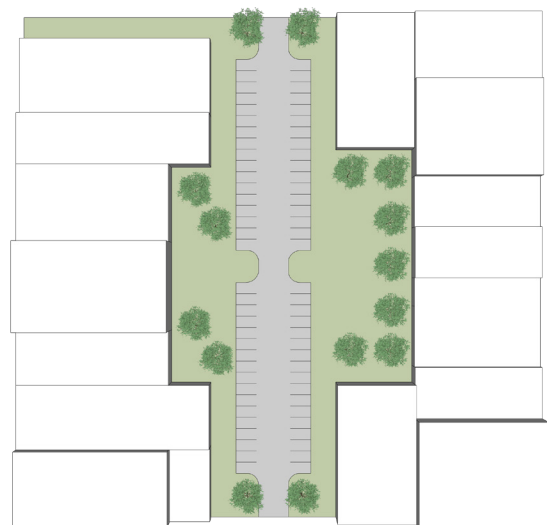


Figure 3.18 | Surface Parking Configuration Between Buildings

BUILDING DESIGN

AN ARRAY OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND MATERIALS CONTRIBUTE TO A DOWNTOWN'S CHARACTER; THEREFORE, CAREFUL CONSIDERATION MUST BE GIVEN FOR A BUILDING'S SCALE, ELEMENTS, AND FEATURES TO ENSURE A COHESIVE DOWNTOWN.

DISTRICT CHARACTER

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

TIER I

This district captures all the other downtown districts with the exception of the Tier III - Timrod Park Residential District (D-4). There are a variety of building types and architectural styles in this district. Parcels that only fall within this district include former residential buildings that have transitioned to commercial uses, such as those along South Coit Street, as well as some mid-century office buildings. Redevelopment in this area should be complimentary to the downtown core and mindfully transition between commercial and residential land uses.



South Coit Street Converted Residential Office | Google Maps

DOWNTOWN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

TIER II

This district includes the area immediately outside the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1). The buildings within this district are mostly retail. The buildings are larger in form, and include many civic buildings. The civic buildings have more traditional architecture with the exception of the Florence County Complex Building, a 1970 modernist style. New development in this area should provide appropriate transitions to the historic core and be an extension of the historic downtown.

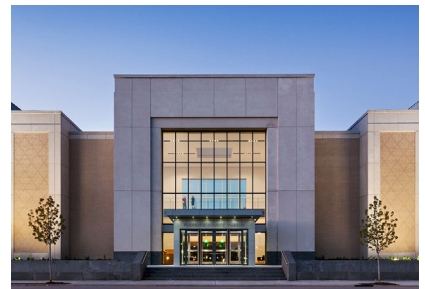


Multi-Family Development in the Downtown Central Business District (D-2)

DOWNTOWN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT

TIER III

This district has a wide range of building types, including civic buildings such as the Poynor School, theaters, museums, places of worship, traditional retail buildings, strip commercial buildings, gas stations, and 1950s and 1960s era banks. There are both traditional and modern architectural styles in this district.



Florence County Museum | McMillan Pazdan Smith

TIMROD PARK RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

The Tier III - Timrod Park Residential District is a historic, residential neighborhood that features predominately single-family craftsman style homes built in the 1930s and 1940s. Maintaining, restoring, and carefully developing within this historic area is of utmost importance.



Timrod Park Home | Greater Pee Dee MLS

IRBY STREET CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

The goal of this district is to promote redevelopment of existing structures in a manner which enhances the character of the corridor. At present, there are a number of drive-through restaurants, driveway cuts, and surface parking lots. Improving pedestrian mobility and adding thoughtful landscaping can help transform the corridor into a more visually appealing and welcoming commercial area.



Irby Street Corridor | Google Streetview

FOOD ARTISAN WAREHOUSE DISTRICT

The intent of this district is to create an environment for commercial, retail, employment, service, and small-scale artisan manufacturing. Design should reflect the cultural and historic architectural elements of the district but also allow for creative and interesting design that complements the adjacent neighborhoods.



City Center Farmers Market

DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

The buildings within the district boundaries are recognized as the most significant historic structures in the downtown core. The district primarily consists of two-story commercial and mixed-use buildings, some of which are in excellent condition and have undergone extensive renovations, while others await investment. The Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1) includes a collection of 34 buildings that contribute to the architectural significance of this National Register-listed district. Many of the buildings feature defining characteristics such as brick facades, embellished cornices, flat roof lines, decorative brick moldings, and vertical pilasters.



Downtown Historic District (H-1) Facades

NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

REHABILITATION OF NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

This section establishes the standards for rehabilitating commercial properties within Downtown Florence, emphasizing the preservation and enhancement of each of the district's unique character and historical significance. Downtown Florence's architectural significance spans two primary periods: Historic era from 1890 to 1940 and 1940 to the Mid-Century Modern era.

For comprehensive guidance on rehabilitating historic properties, refer to The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. These nationally recognized standards provide a framework for maintaining historical authenticity while accommodating modern needs.

Building Elements

Storefronts & Building Fronts

- Preserve elements, materials, and features that are original to the building or are early remodeling projects that might have become significant in their own right. Repair them as necessary.
- Do not remove non-original storefronts that may have become historically significant alterations to the building. An example would be a Mid-Century Modern ground-floor design seen within the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1).
- Character-defining elements may include cornices, windows, doors, trim, storefront windows, or historic hardware. Additional elements can be considered upon approval of the Planning Director.
- Any alterations that cover up windows, cornices, decorative features, or significant portions of the building's facade should be removed. These changes disrupt the building's proportions and alter its appearance.
- If significant storefront features are uncovered during renovation, assess their condition for preservation, repair, or reconstruction.

- Reconstruct missing elements based on physical evidence or historic photos, if available. If not, replace them with new elements that respect the building's design and architectural period of significance.
- Materials that are incompatible with the building or district character should be removed.
- Any unlisted materials planned for addition or removal must be approved by the DRB.
- Incompatible materials vary depending on the style and age of the building but may include:
 - » Unpainted aluminum frame windows and doors
 - » Unpainted aluminum panels or display framing
 - » Reflective or tinted glass display windows,
 - » T1-11 siding
 - » Vinyl or aluminum siding
 - » Wood shingles
 - » Metal awnings
 - » Coach lanterns
 - » Residential style solid doors
 - » Plastic shutters, inoperable shutters, or shutters on windows where they never previously existed
- Storefront windows should not be reduced in size or removed. If a singular window must be replaced, the replacement should match the style and character of the other windows.
- Original elements, such as cornices or transom windows, should not be covered by signage.
- In instances where residential structures have been converted to commercial uses, features such as front porches and original facade windows should be retained.
- For industrial buildings with garage doors converted to commercial uses, adapt the designs to be more transparent by incorporating glass into the doors or creating a new storefront design within the garage opening.

Source: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/secretary-standards-treatment-historic-properties.htm>

Storefront Security

- To prevent the appearance of blight, roll-down solid or mesh window and door covers are prohibited. Thicker security glass is recommended at the ground level, combined with alarm systems if necessary.
- Decorative metal security grilles, finished in dark colors, may be allowed to the side or rear of windows and doors with DRB approval.
- Display window lighting in the evening can also serve as a deterrent to crime. Interior security measures for windows and doors do not require DRB review.

Materiality of Facades, Detailing, & Walls

- The exterior wall material of the building should be maintained.
- Wood siding or trim should be repaired if possible and then repainted in lieu of installing new trim.
- Patching areas of deterioration with materials to match the existing components is preferred to re-siding or replacing the entire wall surface.
- Wood or metal cornice details, cornerboards, window trim, and door surrounds should be reused or recreated in the original material.



127 West Evans Street Renovation Before | Google Earth



127 West Evans Street Renovation After | Google Earth

Roofs, Gutters, & Downspouts

- Whenever possible, existing roof materials determined to be original or historically accurate should be repaired or replaced in-kind to match existing materials.
 - » If repair is not possible then replacement with historic materials appropriate to the roof form and style should be considered.
 - » If flat or low-pitched roofs are not seen from the ground, such as in the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1), then a synthetic or man-made material may be used, such as TPO, a thermoplastic elastomer.
- Changes in roof form or historic roof elements, including the removal and addition of dormers on the front of buildings, are generally not permitted.

Dormers and Cornices

- Dormer, cornice, and frieze details reflect and enhance the architectural style of a building and should be preserved.
- Details such as dentils, brackets, and pilasters should not be covered over or enclosed to reduce the need for maintenance.



Preserved Cornice On A Downtown Florence Storefront

Doors

- Preserve and repair original doors and door surrounds whenever possible. When replacement is necessary, doors should attempt to match the original doors. If no documentation of the original door exists, replacements should be designed to reflect the building’s architectural period.
- For primary facades, replacement doors must closely match the original in material, style, proportions, and detailing. Altering the size or shape of original door openings is not permitted.
- Secondary entrances, such as side or rear doors, should also be repaired or replaced with designs compatible with the building's character. While greater flexibility is allowed for secondary entrances, replacement doors should still respect the architectural period and use durable, historically appropriate materials.

Windows

- The proportions and relationship between doors and windows should align with the architectural style and character of the building.
- Window types evolved with each architectural period, reflecting changes in style and technology. During the Federal period, sashes were typically composed of smaller panes of glass set within muntins, while later periods, such as the Modern era, featured sashes made from single large panes of glass. Additionally, windows varied in operation, including double-hung, single-hung, and fixed styles, depending on the period and building design.
- Whenever possible, existing windows should be repaired to preserve their original character. If replacement is necessary, new windows must match the original in operation and glazing style.
- Window openings should remain unaltered to accommodate replacement windows.
- The following replacement windows are prohibited:
 - » Multi-paned sashes with snap-in muntins designed to replicate the original pattern
 - » Tinted glass
 - » Vinyl or metal replacement windows

Shutters

- Shutters are a common feature of older buildings and should be preserved if functional.
- For standards on replacement shutters, reference **New Construction of Non-Residential Buildings**.
- The rhythm and spacing of the original siding or trim should be recreated.
 - » For example, if the original cornice included dentil molding, then this should be included in the rehabilitation process.

Building Colors

- Choose colors that are historically appropriate and complementary to the building’s architectural style. Previously unpainted masonry surfaces, such as brick or stone, must remain unpainted to preserve their original character.
- Building trim should either harmonize with or provide a subtle accent to the predominant facade color, ensuring a cohesive appearance.
- When repainting exterior building elements, use earth tones or neutral shades that align with the building’s historical period and the surrounding streetscape.
- More primary colors can be introduced with awnings and signage. Bright or fluorescent colors, such as pink, orange, or bright purple should be avoided.



New Wood Door and Refurbished Windows in Downtown Florence



Corner Entry Design



Downtown Windows



Jack's Books Storefront Maintaining Architectural Style | Post & Courier



Building Facade Maintaining Earth Colored Tones in Downtown Florence

NEW CONSTRUCTION OF NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Facade Articulation and Massing

- For buildings 100 feet in width or depth, facades must be divided into shorter segments using modulation, occurring at intervals no greater than 60 feet. Each modulation must be at least 2 feet in depth.
- Ground-floor designs should incorporate features such as arcades, galleries, colonnades, outdoor plazas, or dining areas. These elements contribute to meeting the required build-to percentages.
- The first two floors above street grade should be visually distinct from the upper floors, with design elements that enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Special attention must be given to the building base by incorporating features like corbeling, molding, string courses, ornamentation, material or color changes, recessing, architectural lighting, or sculptural details.
- Buildings located on corners or at the end of visual axes should include additional height or architectural features to emphasize their prominence.

Building Elements

Entry Design

- The primary pedestrian entry must be a prominent feature on the primary frontage.
- For corner buildings with dual frontages, the main pedestrian entry may be located at the corner.

Storefronts & Building Fronts

- New construction should thoughtfully consider the architectural context of adjacent buildings on both sides of the infill space.
- The ground levels of new retail commercial buildings should feature at least 60% transparency up to a height of 10 feet, where feasible.
- Storefronts must include doors to enhance street vitality.
 - » Recessed doorways are encouraged, with a maximum recess of 5 feet from the front wall.
 - » Doors must not swing into the sidewalk or pedestrian zone.

- Civic or office buildings, while lacking traditional storefronts, should feature ground-floor designs that create visual interest. Examples include large glassed-in lobbies, ground-floor retail spaces, or display areas.
- Entries to larger institutional or office buildings should be articulated to further enhance visual interest.
- In commercial areas with predominantly residential architectural designs, new construction should align with the existing context by incorporating elements such as front porches.

Windows

- Acceptable window types include single-hung, double-hung, casement, and bay windows. Faux windows are not permitted. Other window types may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Director.
- Single-hung and double-hung windows, common in upper-story commercial buildings in the region, are taller than they are wide and feature a horizontal rail dividing the upper and lower sections.
- Windows should have true divided lights or fixed interior and exterior muntins with internal spacers, maintaining traditional design aesthetics.
 - » Flat muntins, exterior removable grilles, or grilles between glass are not allowed.
 - » The ratio of muntins to glass must be consistent with historic buildings in the area and appropriate to the architectural style.
- True divided-light windows consist of multiple panes of glass separated by muntins or grilles.
- Materials for windows may include wood, prefinished metal, aluminum, or other appropriate metals.
- Tinted or mirrored glass is prohibited on major building elevations in all Downtown Districts.
- Vinyl windows are not allowed in the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1).



Figure 3.19 | Building Articulation

BUILDING ARTICULATION		TIER I		TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V
		D-1	D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1	
Roofline Variation	A	●		●		●		●	
Stepbacks & Projections	B	●		●		●		●	
Balconies	C	○		○		X		○	
Awnings	D	○		○		○		○	●
Arcades	E	○		○		X		○	●

Figure 3.20 | Building Articulation Table

Note: In the table above: ● indicates preferred, ○ indicates allowed but not preferred, and X indicates not allowed.

Doors

- Doors should preferably be constructed of wood. Metal-clad, fiberglass, steel, or metal doors are considered on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Director.
- In the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1), door design must relate to the district's historic context through:
 - » The ratio of solid walls to door openings.
 - » The pattern and placement of door openings.
 - » The general size and style of doors.
- Shopfront doors must maintain a base height of at least 2 feet from the ground plane unless architectural elements, such as glass roll-up doors, are incorporated.
- Vinyl and PVC doors are prohibited in the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1).

Shutters

- The size and shape of shutters should correspond to the size and shape of the window opening.
- Shutters should be mounted on hinges directly adjacent to the window jamb.
- Shutters should be made of wood.
- Inoperable shutters or plastic shutters are not permitted.

Awnings and Canopies

- Commercial buildings or modified storefronts may incorporate fabric awnings or a combination of metal, glass, and fabric for a more modern design.
- Awnings should be placed carefully within the storefront to avoid interference with signage, distinctive architectural features, street trees, or other street elements.
- Awnings should complement the building's color and architecture.
- Printed signage on awnings is prohibited.
- Back-lit, plastic, or dome awnings are prohibited.
- Awnings should not extend across the entire storefront but instead follow the rhythm of the window openings.
- Bubble awnings are not permitted.

Roofs

- Use roof forms such as sloped, flat, gable, or hipped, or combinations of forms in the design of non-residential buildings that relate to the existing surrounding context.

- » Within the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1), roofs should be flat and hidden by a cornice and/or parapet to match the surrounding architecture.

- Roof materials should match the materials being used in the new building.
- Solar panels, satellite dishes, and mechanical equipment should be installed on secondary areas of the roof and/or screened by parapet walls or other design features.

Materiality of Facades, Detailing, & Walls

- Buildings should be made of compatible traditional materials such as brick, stucco, stone, split face block, and wood.
- Concrete block, concrete board, and pre-engineered corrugated metal panels are not permitted.
- Trim, storefront elements, and other decorative features should be made of wood or metal. Substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Building Colors

- Building colors should blend harmoniously with the surrounding streetscape, following principles of historic color theory, as articulated by Randy Wilson.
- Non-residential development should adhere to these guidelines:
 - » Choose colors inspired by natural materials, such as stone and brick, to ensure a cohesive and historically appropriate appearance.
 - » The main body of the building should be limited to two colors, while trim details, such as window casings, doors, moldings, cornices, and railing, may include up to three colors.
 - » Preferred trim colors include white, off-white, dark gray, black, or darker shades of red, green, or blue.
- Prohibited colors include:
 - » Neon, fluorescent, or highly reflective finishes that could disrupt the streetscape and character of the particular district.
- Non-conforming paint colors require review and approval by the DRB.

		TIER I		TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V
		D-1	D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1	
NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING ELEMENTS	Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood, Prefinished Metal, Aluminum, or Other Appropriate Metals Are Allowed No Reflective/ Tinted Glass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood, Prefinished Metal, Aluminum, or Other Appropriate Metals Are Allowed No Reflective/ Tinted Glass 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood or Composite Matching Historical Character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood, Prefinished Metal, Aluminum, or Other Appropriate Metals Are Allowed No Reflective/ Tinted Glass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Vinyl, Reflective/ Tinted Glass, Faux Muntins Wood Windows Only 		
	Doors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood, Metal-Clad, Fiberglass, Steel, Or Metal Doors Are Allowed Modern Designs Allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood Preferred Metal-Clad or Fiberglass Case-By-Case Vinyl And PVC Doors Are Prohibited 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood Preferred Matching Historical Character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood, Metal-Clad, Fiberglass, Steel, or Metal Doors Are Allowed Modern Designs Allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood Preferred Metal-Clad or Fiberglass Case-By-Case Vinyl And PVC Doors Are Prohibited 		
	Shutters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood, Vinyl or Non-Functional Shutters Are Allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood, Vinyl or Non-Functional Shutters Are Allowed 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood or Composite Shutters or Non-Functional Shutters Allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood, Vinyl or Non-Functional Shutters Are Allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional Wood Shutters Plastic or Faux Wood Is Prohibited 		
	Building Colors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Muted, Earth-Tone, or Neutral Colors Inspired by Natural Materials Brighter Tones Are Allowed If Harmonious No Neon, Fluorescent, or Highly Reflective Finishes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Muted, Earth-Tone, or Neutral Colors Inspired by Natural Materials No Neon, Fluorescent, or Highly Reflective Finishes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Muted, Earth-Tone, or Neutral Colors Inspired by Natural Materials No Neon, Fluorescent, or Highly Reflective Finishes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Muted, Earth-Tone, or Neutral Colors Inspired By Natural Materials Brighter Tones Are Allowed If Harmonious No Neon, Fluorescent, or Highly Reflective Finishes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Muted, Earth-Tone, or Neutral Colors Inspired By Natural Materials No Neon, Fluorescent, or Highly Reflective Finishes 		

Figure 3.21 | Non-Residential Building Elements



Florence Hyatt Place Consisting of Compatible Materials | Premier Wall Systems



Old Florence Library Addition Matching Historic Character

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Residential development includes single-family homes, duplexes and multiplexes, townhomes, and multifamily. Most residential structures are in Tier III, which encompasses the entire Timrod Park Residential District (D-4). Many homes within Tier III are historic and should refer to the Rehabilitation Standards. New residential construction in Tier III should compliment the existing architectural styles and materials found within the district. Residential construction outside of Tier III is also subject to these standards but may emulate more of the architectural styles seen in the downtown core.

REHABILITATION

Building Elements

Foundations

A foundation forms the base of a building. Many of the homes in Downtown Florence have a brick foundation.

- Ensure land is graded to direct water away from the foundation, and install drains if necessary.
- Remove any vegetation that may cause structural disturbances at the foundation.
- Do not install pavement up to the foundation.
- Retain original decorative vents and keep foundation vents open so that air flows freely
- Repair or replace deteriorated foundation materials like brick and mortar, matching historic materials closely. Avoid covering the foundation with cladding like replacement siding.
- Do not paint unpainted brick or stone.
- Avoid parging brick or block to create a stucco appearance, as it can harm material performance. Identify and repair the cause of masonry deterioration instead of covering it.
- Slab foundations shall be avoided. Every effort must be made to match the elevation, materials, and style of the original foundation for all improved or new foundations.

Roofs

A roof protects the building from the elements and requires good maintenance for preservation.

- Retain original roof materials like slate, asphalt, clay tile, or metal.
- Preserve original roof shapes.
- Retain features like dormers, cornices, rafter tails, and chimneys. New dormers should match the structure's style. Add skylights only if they are not visible from the street, and are inconspicuous and flush-mounted. Repair roof elements with matching materials.
- Replace historic roof coverings with materials that closely match the original in composition, size, shape, color, and texture. Replace deteriorated slate with matching new slate, as leaks often result from failing flashing, fasteners, or surrounding wood.
- Replace metal roofs with historically accurate standing-seam styles with thin, hand-folded seams. Avoid modern pre-coated metal roofs with larger grooves and snap lock seams.
- Position skylights, solar panels, and antennae in areas not visible from the street without altering the roof structure.
- Place roof equipment behind parapets, screens, or in setback locations to reduce visibility.
- Use pre-finished, factory-coated metal roofs in neutral colors like gray, brown, or black. Avoid bright colors or raw anodized aluminum.

Gutters

Gutters and downspouts direct water away from the building. The appearance of gutters (shape, size, and materials) can contribute or detract of a building's historic character.

- Retain and repair existing metal gutters and downspouts. Maintain built-in gutters, as they are key design elements, to prevent deterioration.
- Replace gutters and downspouts to match the original. Use half-round profiles instead of ogee, square, or rectangular shapes. Avoid removing historic fabric during installation.
- Use appropriately sized, factory-clad metal gutters and downspouts with a finish color that complements the building.
- Place downspouts in an unobtrusive location on the building. Gutters should not be placed down front elevations.

Chimneys

Chimneys are key visual and functional elements that provide ventilation for fireplaces and furnaces in historic homes.

- Retain original chimneys and decorative features.
- Repair chimneys with matching materials and mortar joints.
- Avoid removing primary masonry chimneys visible from the street that contribute to the building's original character.
- Rear secondary chimneys or flues in less visible areas may be considered for removal.
- Avoid adding new masonry chimneys visible from the street.

Porches & Balconies

Porches and balconies are focal points of historic homes, defined by their size, location, and elements, like doors, columns, railings, and decorative features.

- Original porches and balconies that contribute to the character of a building should be preserved and kept open to maintain their functionality for shade and cooling.
- Repairs or replacements of porch and balcony elements should match the original materials and details. Key features, such as handrails, balusters, columns, and flooring, should not be removed.
- Missing elements should be reconstructed using physical or photographic documentation to ensure historical accuracy.
- Enclosing porches or balconies on primary elevations, altering front porches to reorient entrances, or enclosing side porches or balconies is not recommended.
- Original or historic porch and balcony railings may be adapted to meet current building codes, where necessary.



Home With Brick Foundation and Porch in Timrod Park | Homes

Doors & Entrances

Entrances feature doors, sidelights, trim, transoms, decorative glass, and hardware, providing security and ventilation.

- Retain and repair original entrance and front door features and materials.
- Replace irreparable historic doors with ones matching the original size, design, material, and style. Avoid using generic or "stock" doors.
- Avoid replacing original trim with styles from a different period or theme.
- Do not alter entrance or door opening sizes.
- Storm doors should be wood, composite, or paintable metal, and match door proportions. Avoid obscuring the front door. The storm door should be painted to match the main door or trim.
- Do not relocate the primary front entrance. Conversions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Trim

Retain all original trim, as it defines the style and character of historic buildings.

- Repair original trim, matching original materials, details, and profiles.
- If you cannot repair, replace deteriorated trim with closely matching material, details, and profiles.
- Replace missing trim based on physical evidence.
- Avoid using materials from a different period or style.



Porch and Door Opening in Timrod Park | Zillow

Windows

Windows are key character-defining features of buildings, varying in style, design, and function. Windows contribute to aesthetics, light, ventilation, and modern energy needs.

- The proportions and relationship between doors and windows should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the building and surrounding buildings.
- Retain and preserve windows, including frames, sash, glass, muntins, sills, trim, surrounds, and shutters. Keep hardware in good condition.
- Repair original windows by reinforcing and patching. Often, wood can be repaired rather than replaced. Ensure caulk and glazing putty have proper water drainage and product to material compatibility.
- Replace only window features that are beyond repair with in-kind or like replacements.
- Uncover and repair blocked windows, restoring them to their original dimensions.
- If a window is unused, retain the glass or shutter the backside to maintain its exterior appearance.
- Exterior storm windows should:
 - » Match divisions to original sash lines.
 - » Fit tightly without subframes.
 - » Match the primary window frame color.
 - » Use clear glass.
 - » Be set back from the exterior wall.
- Replacement windows should:
 - » Be replaced only if missing or beyond repair.
 - » Match the original size, shape, height, and width.
 - » Retain the look of double-hung windows, whether operable or not.
 - » Keep the original glass surface area.
 - » Maintain the same number and arrangement of panes.
 - » Use clear glass.
 - » Be painted in historically appropriate colors when possible.
- Wood windows are preferred by vinyl may be approved by the DRB.

Shutters

Originally used for protection and privacy, shutters also accentuate windows and enhance a home's distinctive look.

- Retain original shutters and hardware.
- Replace irreparable shutters to match original size and design.
- Use wood or composite shutters, paintable, without faux wood grain. Avoid vinyl or aluminum.
- Mount shutters on hinges and use rustproof hardware.
- Shutters on bay or multiple windows are not allowed.
- Do not permanently secure shutters open or remove hardware.
- Buildings without historic shutters should remain shutter-free.
- New shutters should match the building's architectural style.

Light Fixtures

Exterior lighting can be an important feature contributing to the character of residential buildings.

- Maintain and repair historic light fixtures.
- Replace missing fixtures with ones that match the house's style and scale.



Window Features

NEW CONSTRUCTION OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Facade Articulation and Massing

Orientation

- Orient new building entrances toward the primary street.
- Orient the main elevation to the primary street, and use porches, side entries, or other features to address the secondary street on corner lots.

Massing & Form

- Relate massing to those of existing adjacent buildings or historic homes.
- Use building forms that relate to surrounding structures, incorporating features like projecting bays or dormers if common.
- Multi-family developments over four units should break up the mass and modulate facades to fit the scale of its historic context.
- Hipped and gable roofs, along with varied forms, details, and materials help reduce building mass.
- New buildings should reduce scale near historic dwellings by using smaller bays, stepping back taller levels, varying planes, breaking roof masses, and using multiple materials.

Height & Width

- The height and width of new buildings must align with adjacent structures and are subject to the height limitations as set out in **Building Height** section.
- Aim to design new single-family homes to match the width of adjacent historic homes.
- New single-family homes should be within 25% of the average width on the block.
 - » Include duplexes and quadplexes, but exclude larger multi-family buildings from the calculation.

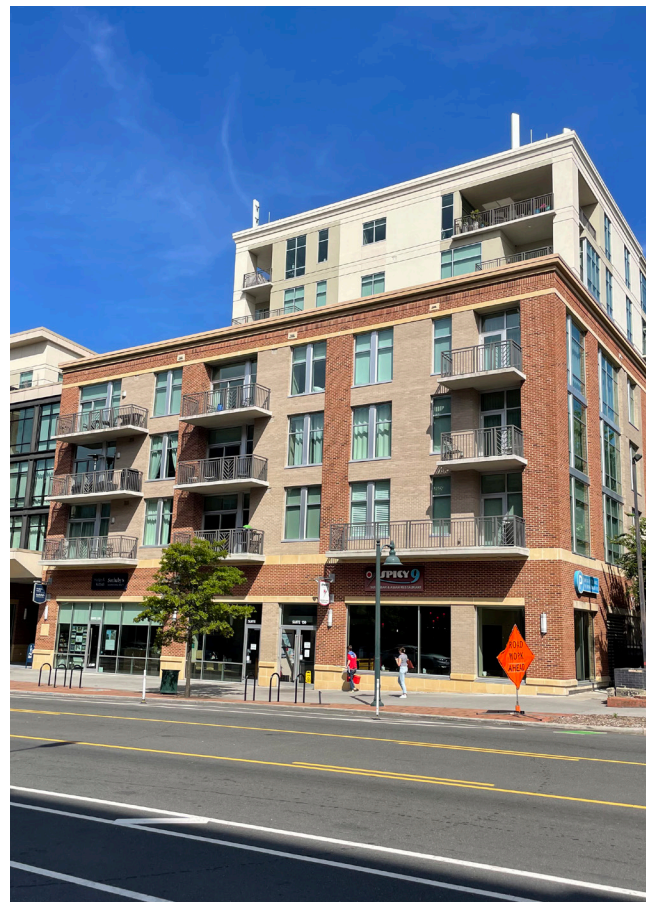
Scale

- Create human scale by including functional elements like porches and porticos, typical of the historic context.
- Materials can also break down the mass of a building and reinforce human scale.

- Design larger structures at tier edges with scale-reduction techniques (massing, height, roof forms, materials) on elevations facing historic homes.
- Apply similar techniques for large multi-family buildings, especially where they face historic dwellings.

Facade Detailing

- All multi-family buildings shall incorporate elements of variation along any facade that abuts a primary frontage. Variation may be achieved by using at least three of the following elements:
 - » Variation in the front facade depth of adjoining dwelling units of at least two feet.
 - » Stepbacks or projections of the front facade of at least two feet in depth at intervals of at least 30 feet.
 - » Change in the roof line such as roof pitch, projections, overhangs, or parapet at an interval of no more than 60 feet.
 - » Architectural features, such as balconies or bay windows, along the front facade.



A Stepback on the Front Facade Helps Reduce the Overall Building Mass

Building Elements

Foundations

- Match the foundation height and material of new buildings to those of nearby historic structures.
- Lowering the grade is strictly forbidden.
- Slab foundations shall be avoided. Foundations shall be constructed in a similar style or character of adjacent historic homes utilizing similar elevations, materials, and styles.

Roofs

- Use gable or hipped roofs that relate to surrounding buildings.
- Consider roof dormers if commonly used nearby, matching the house's style.
- Reflect the roof pitch and gable orientation of surrounding historic buildings.
- Keep the roof size proportional to avoid overwhelming the structure.
- Use eave designs and materials that complement the block's original buildings.
- Match new roof materials to those used in the surrounding context.
- Place skylights, solar panels, and vents in less visible areas.
- For corner multi-family buildings, use roof design to reduce building scale relative to nearby homes.

Trim

- Use trim details inspired by adjacent historic buildings to enhance the new building's design.
- Match the scale and proportion of trim to that of nearby historic buildings.
- Avoid using the "pork chop" triangular box detail on eave returns.



Timrod Park Historic Home | Zillow.

Doors, Windows, & Shutters

- Relate window and door openings to historic context by the solid to cased opening ratio, rhythm and placement, width-to-height proportion, and general size.
- Respect traditional opening designs—recessed in masonry, raised trim in frame buildings. Flush openings are not allowed.
- Use wood doors (preferred). Metal-clad or fiberglass may be considered for side/rear doors case-by-case.
- Use windows with true divided lights or fixed muntins with spacers. No flat muntins, removable grilles, or grills between glass.
- Avoid tinted, frosted, or mirrored glass on major elevations. Low-e glass may be approved.
- Use wood or composite shutters (no faux wood grain), sized to fit windows, functional, and mounted on hinges. Avoid shutters on bay, double, or ganged windows.

Porches & Balconies

- Include a porch or balcony if most surrounding houses have one.
- Design porches and balconies to match the size, proportion, and placement of nearby historic ones.
- Use materials compatible with the building's style, such as concrete with brick edging, brick, or tongue & groove. Bluestone is not appropriate.
- Porches should be at least 8 feet deep.
- Do not use substitute materials for front porch or balcony floors. Use tongue & groove floors on frame porches.
- Design stoops, recessed entries, and balconies to match existing styles.
- For multi-family buildings, follow historic porch and balcony design examples.



Timrod Park Home | Realtor.

Additions

- The height, scale, and massing of additions shall be compatible with the style and character of the existing structure.
- Place additions on the rear to minimize street visibility and keep within proportion of the existing structure.
- Attach additions so the building's form remains intact if removed.
- Retain the original building orientation, keeping the primary entrance on the street.
- Preserve the existing roof pitch and make new roof lines secondary.
- Additions should be designed to compliment the existing building. The new work shall be differentiated from the old, but compatible with its massing, form, scale, and materials.
- Additions that are smaller than the existing building, and less than 50% of added square footage may be approved administratively.

Accessory Structures

- Accessory structures are considered as garages, sheds, out buildings, and other structures deemed appropriate for residential uses by the Planning Director.
- Accessory structures must be at a smaller scale than the primary residential structure and comply with all UDO requirements.
- Every attempt must be made to ensure that the aesthetic of the accessory structure is compatible with primary residential structure to include building materials, details, and colors.

Architectural and Aesthetic Compatibility

- In single-family uses, no more than 50% of the rear yard should be impervious. This includes roofs of additions to original buildings, paving, decks, patios, pools, and accessory buildings. Wood slated decks are considered permeable.
- Add landscaping that enhances the property, provides green space, and buffers between land uses or property boundaries.
- Retain and preserve the historic and significant character of the property.
- Preserve distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques that define the property.
- Avoid physical or chemical treatments that could damage, alter, or cover original materials.

- Architectural details such as colors, materials, and textures should be compatible with the surrounding historic buildings.
- When designing new elements, maintain a balance with the overall character of the property and its environment.

Cladding

- Cladding materials should enhance the building's appearance, align with the architectural style, and ensure durability.
- Acceptable cladding materials for residential development include:
 - » Brick
 - » Natural Stone
 - » Stucco
 - » Fiber Cement Siding
 - » Treated Or Engineered Wood
 - » Vertical Or Horizontal Lap Siding (Wood or Fiber Cement)
 - » High-Quality Metal Panels (Limited Use in Modern Designs)
 - » Precast Concrete (Finished or Textured)



Primary Residential | Hopedale Builders



Complementary Accessory Structure | Hopedale Builders

- Materials that must go to the DRB and potentially not permissible include:
 - » Vinyl Siding
 - » Aluminum Siding
 - » Plywood or T-111 Paneling
 - » Unfinished Concrete Block (CMU)
 - » Low-Quality Imitation Stone or Brick Veneer
 - » Other Materials Not Listed Above

Building Colors

- Residential building colors should similarly follow the same principles of non-residential development, ensuring cohesion and compatibility with architectural style and context.
- Residential development should adhere to these guidelines:
 - » Use colors that complement the architectural style and surrounding context, emphasizing natural and historically appropriate tones. Homes with historic designations should adhere to historically accurate paint schemes appropriate to their architectural period.
 - » Preferred colors include those inspired by natural materials, such as muted or earth tones, including browns, tans, reds, greens, grays, and off-whites.
 - » The main body of homes should be limited to one or two cohesive colors.
 - » Preferred trim colors include white, off-white, dark gray, black, or darker shades of red, green, or blue.
 - » Colors should coordinate with roofing and foundation materials to create a unified look.
- Prohibited colors include
 - » Neon, fluorescent, or highly reflective finishes that could disrupt the streetscape and character of the particular district.
- Non-conforming paint colors require review and approval by the DRB.

FRANCHISE ARCHITECTURE

- Franchise Architecture, a standardized architectural building style used as part of a program to promote brand identity through visual recognition, is prohibited in the Downtown Districts.
- Franchise architecture shall be modified as necessary to meet all Downtown Design Standards.
- Franchise architecture must be reviewed by the DRB for approval in the Downtown Districts.



Modified Franchise Design Integrated Into the Historic Downtown of Chapel Hill, NC



Modified Franchise Design Integrated into the Ground Floor in Chapel Hill, NC

DRIVE-THROUGHS

- Drive-through facilities or services are only permitted in portions of the Irby Street Corridor Overlay District (ISCOD) that are outside of the Downtown Central Business District (D-2) and Arts & Culture District (D-3).
 - » This applies to any type of drive-through facility or service including restaurants and financial institutions.
- Drive-through windows shall not be located along a primary frontage but rather at the rear or side of the building.
- Drive-through design should not compromise pedestrian walkability.
- Drive-through service windows, stacking lanes, and circulation shall be screened from the public-right-of-way.
 - » The standards for parking lot screening apply to all drive-throughs in the Irby Street Corridor Overlay District (ISCOD).
- Walk-up service windows are the preferred service window in a downtown pedestrian-oriented district.



Walk-Up Window at ChocoBella in Downtown Florence

Case Study

RALEIGH, NC

McDonald's Drive-Through

The McDonald's located at the intersection of East South Street and South Wilmington Street in Downtown Raleigh, NC, was renovated in 2020 and serves as a model for how drive-throughs can integrate with urban design without compromising its integrity. Positioned on the corner, the building addresses both primary streets, while wide sidewalks and bicycle parking encourage various modes of travel. The drive-through window is discreetly placed on the side of the building, and service areas, including dumpsters, are tucked away at the rear, screened effectively from view. A vibrant mural on the side of the building enhances the sense of place and adds to the overall urban aesthetic.



McDonald's Drive-through in Downtown Raleigh | Google Earth., Raleigh CW

SIGNS

General Standards

- Signs within downtown should enhance street vitality and align with adjacent uses and signage.
- Recommended materials include:
 - » Wood (carved, sandblasted, etched, sealed, and painted or stained)
 - » Metal (formed, cast, or engraved, primed, and protected against corrosion)
 - » High-density foam or similar materials (new materials allowed if they match the design)
 - » Custom neon tubing (integrated into permitted sign types)
- Signs should be located on private property and not within the public right-of-way, with the exception of sidewalk signs.
- Signage that complies with established standards can be approved administratively; however, signage that does not meet these standards must be reviewed and approved by the DRB.
- For more information on signage standards, refer to Part 5: Sign Regulations in the [UDO](#).



El Agave Building-Mounted Sign | William Harwell, El Agave Mexican Restaurant

Permitted Sign Types

- Building-Mounted Signs
 - » Signs may be placed on the building's face, windows, or doors.
 - » Individual letters or digits can be placed at the front edge of a canopy over a ground-level entry.
- Painted Wall Signs
 - » Signs painted or stenciled on walls, windows, or doors must compliment the building's style, and are only appropriate for non-residential development.
 - » Painted signs must not cover architectural features like doors or cornices. Business info (e.g., addresses, hours) is not considered a painted wall sign.
 - » Lighting may be directed downward on painted wall signs.
 - » Owners are responsible for maintaining painted wall signs and repairing damage.
- Projecting Signs
 - » Should be scaled for pedestrians, not for vehicles.
 - » Painted wood or metal is the preferred material.
- Hanging Signs
 - » Must be hung parallel to the building facade from a second-floor arcade or balcony, or within a first-floor entry alcove.
- Externally Illuminated Signs
 - » Preferred illumination is from a shielded white or yellow light source.
 - » White or colored halo lighting with opaque letters/symbols displayed in front of a background reflecting a hidden light source is permitted.
- Sidewalk Signs
 - » A-frame "sandwich signs" are allowed during business hours.
 - » Sidewalk signs are permitted within the Building Zone area of the public right-of-way, but may not obstruct the pedestrian zone.

Source: <https://online.encodeplus.com/regs/florence-sc/index.aspx>

Prohibited Sign Types

- Changeable message and flashing signs are prohibited.
- Internally illuminated letters, neon, roof, and movable signs must be reviewed by the DRB, except where there is historical significance, architectural value, or use.
- Businesses are not allowed to paint over awning signs. Awnings must be replaced or professionally redone so no remnant of the old sign remains on the fabric awning.
- Billboards are prohibited.
 - » Billboard signs that are "grandfathered in" must be kept maintained, relevant to their intended purpose, and may not be structurally altered to increase size or area of the advertisement space, support structure, pole, or footings.

Historic Signage

- Preserving unique and historic signs:
 - » Efforts should be made to preserve sculptural, historic, or landmark signs that give downtown character and distinguish it from other areas.
 - » These signs may include historic painted wall signs that are no longer relevant to the current business but still contribute to the historical and cultural fabric of the district.
- Landmark signs:
 - » Signs that contribute to the historical or cultural character of the area must be preserved.
 - » Landmark signs are subject to Planning Director approval.
 - » These may include historic painted wall signs, even if the business or product is no longer on site.

Advertising Vacancies

- The posting of advertisements is prohibited on windows, walls, or any other surfaces, with the exception of for-sale or lease information.
- "Coming Soon" and similar signage required a temporary sign permit with a display limit of 30 days.

Maintenance

- The property owner or business owner is responsible for ensuring that signs are maintained and in good condition.
- Any signs that suffer from vandalism or destruction must be repaired or removed.



Cru Wine & Tap Sidewalk Sign | Cru Wine & Tap



Town Hall Restaurant & Bar Sign | SC Now



Luther F Carter Projecting Sign | SC Now

Replacement of Nonconforming Signs

- Property owners of existing nonconforming signs within downtown must replace them with signs that conform to current standards at the time of replacement.
- Additionally, nonconforming signs must be removed when there is a change in ownership or use of the property, ensuring alignment with downtown signage standards.

Abandoned Signs

- Must be reused, replaced, or removed within a reasonable period of time.

Recommended Materials

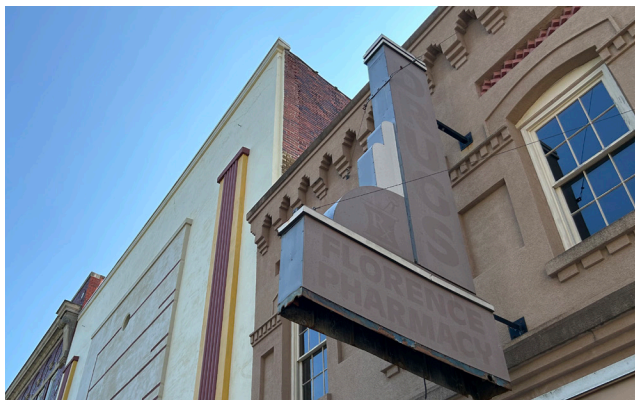
- Sign material should be compatible with the design of the face of the facade where it is to be placed.
 - » Wood: Carved, sandblasted, etched, and properly sealed, primed, and painted or stained.
 - » Metal: Formed, etched, cast, or engraved, and either properly primed and painted or factory-coated to resist corrosion.
 - » High-density pre-formed foam or similar materials, provided they are designed in line with these guidelines and painted or finished to complement the architecture.
 - » Custom neon tubing: May be incorporated as graphics or lettering into permitted sign types, enhancing design with appropriate use.
- New materials may also be considered if they align with these guidelines are finished to blend with the architectural style.



ChocoBella Window Sign | ChocoBella



Painted Wall Sign



Historic Florence Pharmacy Drugs Sign



Top Hat Special-Teas Hanging Sign

		TIER I	TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V
		D-1	D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1
SIGNAGE TYPES BY TIER	Specific Sign Standards	Flat faced signs are permitted if not internally illuminated.	No specific sign standards.		No specific sign standards.	This district promotes creative sign design that is in harmony with the architecture and style of the proposed development. Signs should reflect the unique character of the area.	Tenants may have up to two attached signs covering no more than 10% of the facade, with projecting signs limited to 12 square feet, a 4-foot projection, and 8 feet of clearance.	Signs must be dimensional.
	Building-Mounted Signs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Painted Wall Signs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Projecting Signs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Hanging Signs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Externally Illuminated Signs	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
	Internally Illuminated Signs	○	○	○	X	○	○	○
	Freestanding Signs	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
	Monument Signs	●	●	○	○	●	●	X
	Changeable or Flashing Signs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Billboards	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Signs on Awnings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Signs on Windows	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

3.22 | Signage by Tiers Table

Note: In the table above: ● indicates preferred, ○ indicates allowed but not preferred, and X indicates not allowed.

PUBLIC REALM

HOW BUILDINGS AND SITES INTERACT WITH THE PUBLIC REALM IS CRITICAL TO CREATING AN INVITING AND SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN ATMOSPHERE WHERE PEOPLE DESIRE TO BE.

BLOCKS

Much of Florence's charm lies in its historic downtown. The block pattern sets the foundation for the building form contributing to its character. The blocks are approximately 650 feet by 650 feet. Although the downtown core is pedestrian friendly, an ideal urban block is between 300-500 feet to promote walkability and cross maneuverability. The [Downtown 2030 Master Plan](#) identifies the need for more frequent cross-connections within downtown. The plan suggests opportunities for future alleys or "block-cut throughs" to help achieve this goal.

- Future development should emulate the grid structure but implement shorter block lengths to allow for the highest pedestrian activity.
 - » Pedestrian cut throughs and alleys should be utilized to achieve this goal.



Figure 3.23 | Block Length

STREETS

Streets are a vital component of a City connecting people to places. In a downtown setting, streets are a place themselves — filled with lighting, plantings, outdoor dining, and people. By designing or retrofitting downtown streets, the utmost priority should be given to pedestrians.

The 2030 Downtown Master Plan outlines the following key downtown corridors:

- Evans Street as the Core Corridor
- Dargan Street as the Cultural Corridor
- Irby Street as the Commercial Corridor
- Coit Street as the Neighborhood Commercial Corridor
- Cheves Street as the Eds and Meds Corridor
- Palmetto Street as the Connecting Corridor

STREETSCAPE CHARACTER

While the streetscapes of Evans Street and Dargan Street within the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1) are well-defined, other corridors would benefit from enhancements. Improvements to right-size these corridors and enhance the pedestrian experience could include road diets with on-street parking, bulb-outs for landscaping or outdoor dining, wider ADA-compliant sidewalks, bicycle facilities, enhanced paving for sidewalks and crosswalks, pedestrian-focused signals, street amenities, improved lighting, placemaking features, and stormwater management.

Source: https://www.cityofflorence.com/sites/default/files/uploads/florence_downtown_plan_final_adopted_june2023.pdf

STREETSCAPE CHARACTER		TIER I	TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V
		D-1	D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1
	On-Street Parking	●	●		○	●		●
	Bulb-Outs	●	●		○	○		●
	Wider Sidewalks	○	●		●	●		●
	Enhanced Paving	○	○		○	○		●
	Signal Improvements	●	●		●	●		●
	Bicycle Facilities	●	●		○	●		○
	ADA Improvements	●	●		●	●		●
	Street Amenities & Lighting	●	●		●	●		●
Placemaking	●	●		○	●		●	
Stormwater	●	●		○	●		●	

Note: In the table above: ● indicates preferred, ○ indicates allowed but not preferred, and X indicates not allowed.

Figure 3.24 | Streetscape Character Table



West Evans Street Looking Toward Dargan Street



ADA Pedestrian Crossing on North Dargan Street

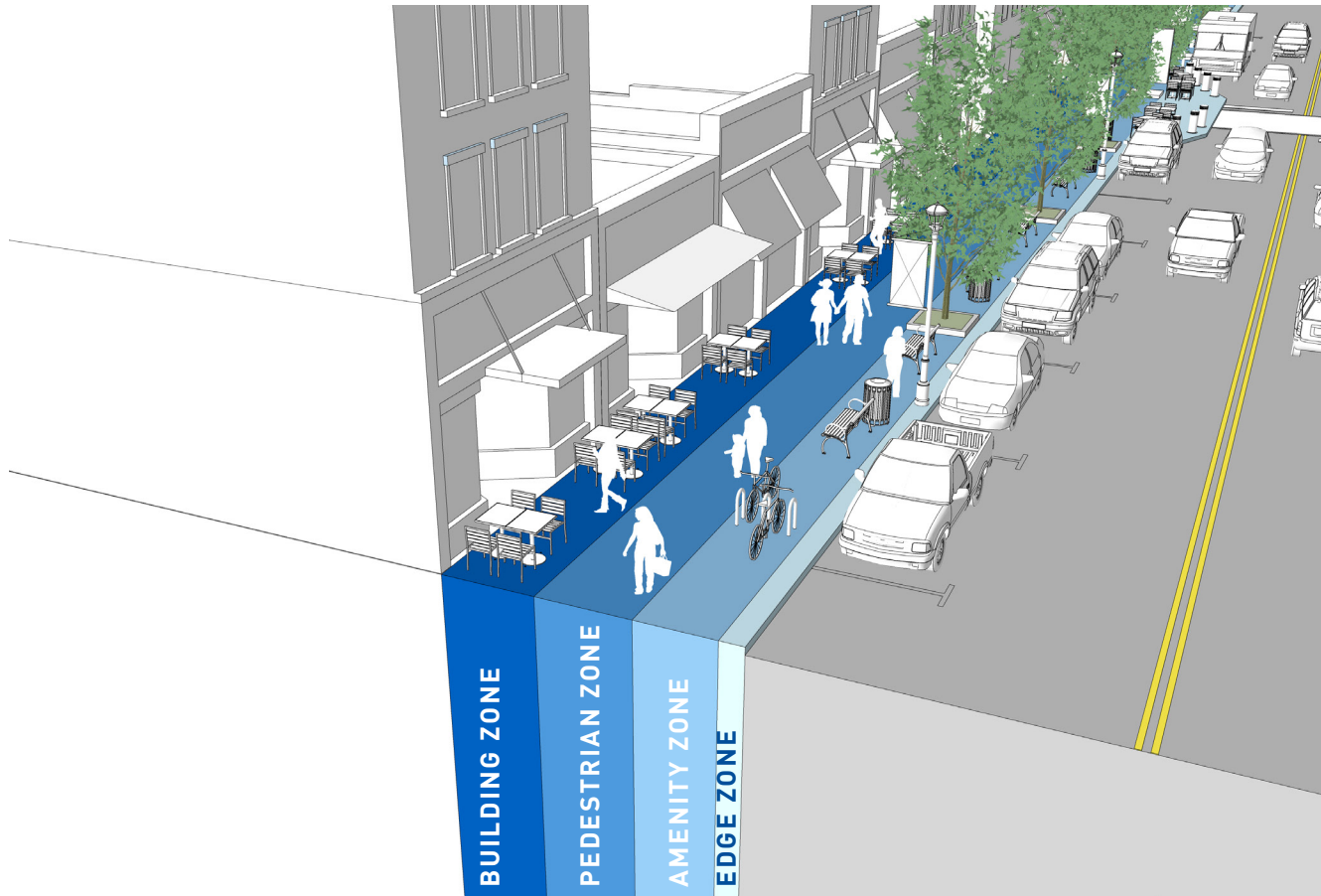


Figure 3.25 | Streetscape Zones

STREETSCAPE ZONES

Zone 1: Edge Zone

The area adjacent to the street reserved for street lighting. It acts as a buffer between on-street parking and the amenity zone allowing car doors to swing open freely without obstruction. A six-inch wide curb should also be included in this area.

Zone 2: Amenity Zone

This is the area outside of the edge zone dedicated for street trees and ornamental plantings as well as benches, bicycle racks, waste receptacles, public art, wayfinding signage, and similar amenities.

Zone 3: Pedestrian Zone

This zone provides space for pedestrian travel. It should be clear of obstacles and encroachments so that pedestrians can move freely along the street.

Zone 4: Building Zone

This is the area immediately adjacent to the structure, where the building's entrances are located. This zone provides connection between the interior building activity and the exterior public realm. It is a blend of the public and private realm.

Allowable uses: outdoor dining, furnishings, small merchandise displays, accent plantings, and art.

Building canopies and balconies may encroach into the Building Zone.

STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

STREET TREES

Street trees should be planted along both sides of the street to provide framing, shade, and pedestrian scale. Trees should be planted in bulbouts, planters, and within tree grates where appropriate. The selection of street trees for additions or replacements should prioritize native species and cultivars that are compatible with existing infrastructure to ensure long-term sustainability and minimize conflicts.

LIGHTING

Street lighting should be pedestrian scale and located within the edge zone. Avenue banners or market lights may be hung from the street lights to enhance the streetscape.

PAVING

Specialty paving should be used to differentiate districts and streets of prominence. A great example of this is the brick lined sidewalks in the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1). Paving should be designed in a manner that provides continuity throughout the Downtown Districts, is easily maintainable, and ADA compliant.

AMENITIES

Benches, trash and recycling receptacles, bicycle facilities, and other furnishings should be incorporated within the streetscape for public use and be of consistent and compatible design for each district.



Streetscape Elements

PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

SIDEWALKS

- For property fronting a street, new development is responsible for sidewalk improvements along the property frontage. This may involve improving existing sidewalk or installing new sidewalk. See Figure 3.4 below for minimum sidewalk width.
 - » Note: Residential construction in Tier III is not responsible for sidewalk improvements.
- Internal sidewalk connections should be provided between buildings and from buildings to all on-site facilities including parking areas, bicycle facilities, open spaces, and amenities.
 - » Internal sidewalks shall be a minimum of 5' wide.
- External sidewalks should be provided from all buildings on-site to the existing or proposed sidewalk system and to abutting multi-use paths, parks, and greenways.
 - » External sidewalks must be a minimum of 5' wide. If connecting to a multi-use path, park, or greenway, the sidewalk shall be a minimum of 6' wide.



Minimum Sidewalk Standard in Tier II and V

MINIMUM SIDEWALK LENGTH ALONG PROPERTY FRONTAGE(S)		
		Minimum Width
TIER I	D-1	6' Feet
	D-2	8' Feet
TIER II	D-3	
	TIER III	D-4
TIER IV		W-1
	ISCOD	
TIER V	H-1	8' Feet

Figure 3.26 | Minimum Sidewalk Width



Multi-Use Path in Mount Pleasant, SC | Mount Pleasant Way

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

BICYCLE FACILITIES

- Expand dedicated bicycle lane networks throughout downtown.
- Utilize on-street and off-street facilities to create an interconnected network of bicycle infrastructure downtown.
- All development shall provide facilities for bicycles as recommended in any adopted City of Florence plan as determined by the Planning Director. Facilities include, but are not limited to: sharrows, dedicated bicycle lanes, and cycle tracks.

MULTI-USE PATHS, GREENWAYS, & TRAILS

- On corridors with heavy traffic volumes, a multi-use path should be considered to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists.
- Plan multi-use paths to connect key destinations within Florence including downtown, parks, neighborhoods, schools, employment centers, and transportation hubs.
- Although the existing trail networks are outside of downtown, efforts should be made to expand and improve greenway and trail networks to create connections between downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, parks, and destinations.
- When a development abuts existing or future multi-use paths, trails, or greenways, public access to such features shall be provided by path connectors. These connectors should be paved and a minimum of 6' wide.
- When future development is planned along a proposed multi-use path, trail, or greenway, as outlined in any City of Florence adopted plan, it is the responsibility of the developer to construct the portion of the trail along the development frontage.
- The Planning Director may adjust the public realm improvement standards when such improvements are not proportional to the need created by the development.



Bicycle Lane in Greenville, SC | Michael Dantler



Florence Rail Trail | Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce

Case Study

HARTSVILLE, SC

Mantissa Row

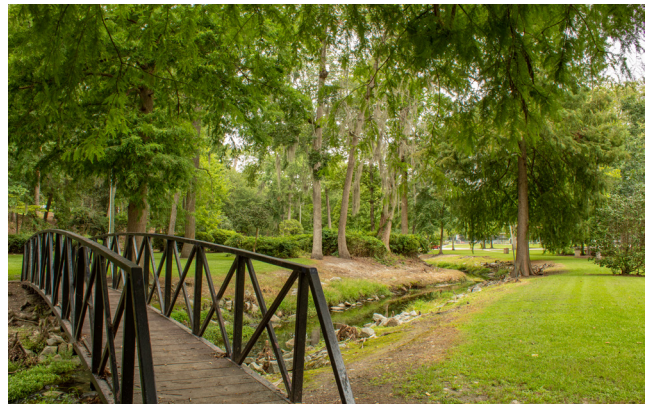
Mantissa Row in Hartsville, SC is an example of how an underutilized alley can be transformed into a pedestrian amenity. This public space includes bollards, specialty paving, planters, tables and chairs, waste receptacles, and market lighting. Overhead signage creates a gateway entrance and further enhances the alley as a destination. Alleys enhance pedestrian circulation by creating additional pathways and reducing block lengths, offering convenient cross-connections that improve walkability and connectivity.



An Underutilized Alley Transformed Into a Pedestrian Amenity in Hartsville, SC



James Allen Plaza | True Light Photography



Timrod Park | City of Florence



Downtown Florence Splash Pad at Griffin Plaza



A Parklet in Columbia, SC | City of Columbia

PUBLIC SPACES

Public spaces in downtown areas include parks, plazas, parklets, and other outdoor areas that are accessible to everyone, regardless of ownership. These spaces provide downtown workers, residents, and visitors a refuge for recreation and relaxation. These spaces can also serve as overflow areas for downtown businesses with proper permitting.

PARKS

As Downtown Florence continues to develop, it is important to continue to invest in existing and future green spaces. Park spaces have a number of benefits including public health, economic development, environmental protection, and community recreation. Efforts must focus on:

- Identifying opportunities to create future park space downtown.
- Ensuring that developments adjacent to existing or future parks provide public access through path connectors. These connectors should be paved and have a minimum width of 6' to promote accessibility and connectivity.

PLAZAS

Plazas are paved public spaces bordered by buildings or streets. These spaces are primarily hardscaped but still include landscaping. They serve as versatile areas for hosting events or providing gathering spaces for downtown visitors.

POCKET PARKS

Pocket parks are small, publicly accessible park spaces that sit between buildings. They can take a variety of shapes and forms, but in a downtown area they often take form on vacant infill parcel sites that are too small for anything else. These are typically filled with site furnishings, landscaping, and public art.

- Introduce pocket parks in underutilized urban spaces.
- Design pocket parks as social hubs and incorporate placemaking elements.

PARKLETS

Parklets are sidewalk extensions that provide more space and amenities for street users. They are installed in on-street parking lanes and typically include amenities such as outdoor dining, bicycle parking, landscaping, or public art. These spaces can be temporary or permanent, sponsored and maintained by business owners and community organizations.

- The City encourages business owners to enhance their adjacent streetscape by installing parklets that align with established design standards. These parklets should feature comfortable seating, public art, and interactive elements to create inviting spaces for the public to enjoy.

GENERAL STANDARDS

- Incorporate placemaking elements such as street furniture, public art, or water features into downtown public spaces.
- Public spaces should be at the same elevation as the streetscape. Minor changes in elevation of 2' or less are permitted with accessibility.
- Public spaces should be landscaped heavily to provide shade as well as visual interest.
- Ensure pedestrians have a clear pathway through public spaces.
- Provide entry into public spaces from the adjacent primary sidewalk.
- Install pedestrian-scaled lighting to increase safety perception.
- Public parks and plazas should contain a variety of seating such as: movable seating, fixed benches, seat walls, and planter ledges.

PLACEMAKING

The interest and functionality of the public realm is greatly enhanced through placemaking. Components of placemaking include: wayfinding systems, avenue banners, public art, and installations. Placemaking activates public spaces making them more engaging for the user.

WAYFINDING

Wayfinding signage is extremely useful in a downtown. It provides directional reference to visitors, and indicates nearby destinations and parking locations. Within the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1), street names within the crosswalk ramps provide wayfinding. This unique type of wayfinding is helpful to the visitor and enhances the overall aesthetic of the Tier V - Downtown Historic District (H-1). Traditional directional signage is present in the downtown core but must be expanded to improve navigation and further strengthen the unique identity of Downtown Florence.

AVENUE BANNERS

Banners lining the streets enhance the character of key corridors and reinforce the identity of Downtown Districts. To create a cohesive and welcoming atmosphere, banners must be installed consistently across all Downtown Districts, expanding beyond their current locations.



Banner in Downtown Goldsboro, NC



Wayfinding | City of Florence

PUBLIC ART

Public art within a downtown expresses the personality of a city—whether it be historical, whimsical, colorful, playful, or interactive. Downtown Florence has public art in the form of sculpture and murals. Most public art is concentrated in the Downtown Historic (H-1) and Downtown Central Business (D-2) Districts, primarily in Tiers II and V, with some extending into the Arts and Culture District (D-3). Public Art greatly enhances the public realm, adding interest to a place. Public Art in Downtown Florence is administered by the Florence Downtown Development Corporation.

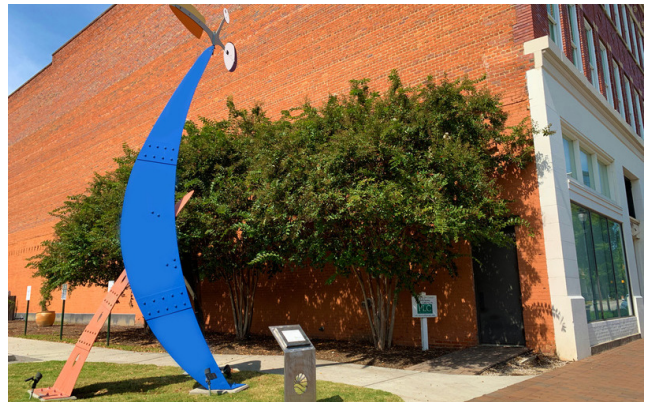
INSTALLATIONS

Installations are temporary artworks that are strategically placed within a space to engage users. These can be located in parklets, plazas, or other public spaces.

- For more information on installations, contact the Florence Downtown Development Corporation.



Houston Person Mural | City of Florence



Big Bleu Birdanna Sculpture | City of Florence

	TIER I	TIER II		TIER III	TIER IV		TIER V
	D-1	D-2	D-3	D-4	W-1	ISCOD	H-1
Site Furnishings	Within Streetscape Amenity and Building Zones, On-Site	Within Streetscape Amenity and Building Zones, On-Site		Not Permitted	Within Streetscape Amenity and Building Zones; On-Site		Within Streetscape Amenity and Building Zones; On-Site
Installations	Located in Parklets, Plazas, and Other Public Places	Located in Parklets, Plazas, and Other Public Places		Not Permitted	Located in Parklets, Plazas, and Other Public Places		Located in Parklets, Plazas, and Other Public Places
Sculptures	Within Streetscape Amenity and Building Zones, On-Site	Within Streetscape Amenity and Building Zones, On-Site		Not Permitted	Within Streetscape Amenity and Building Zones; On-Site		Within Streetscape Amenity and Building Zones, On-Site
Murals	Along Sides and Rear of Buildings	Along Sides and Rear of Buildings		Not Permitted	Along Sides and Rear of Buildings		Subject to Approval
Decorative Paving	Plazas and Other Public Spaces	Specialty Streets, Plazas and Other Public Spaces		Crosswalks	Plazas and Other Public Spaces		Specialty Streets, Plazas and Other Public Spaces
Painted Crosswalks	Permitted	Permitted		Permitted	Permitted		Not Permitted
Artistic Bicycle Racks	Permitted	Permitted		Not Permitted	Permitted		Not Permitted
Cabinet Wraps	Permitted	Permitted		Permitted	Permitted		Subject to Approval
Wayfinding Signage	Permitted	Permitted		Permitted	Permitted		Permitted
Parklets	Permitted Where On-Street Parking Occurs or Row Allows	Permitted Where On-Street Parking Occurs or Row Allows		Not Permitted	Not Permitted		Not Permitted

PLACEMAKING

Figure 3.27 | Placemaking Table

GLOSSARY

- **Amenity Zone:** This is the area outside of the edge zone dedicated for street trees and ornamental plantings as well as benches, bicycle racks, waste receptacles, public art, wayfinding signage, and similar amenities.
- **Arcades:** A series of arches supported by columns or piers that are part of a building's structure.
- **Building Design:** The configuration of building elements such as entry, windows, roofs, doorways, ground floors, and materiality.
- **Building Zone:** This is the area immediately adjacent to the building where the building entrances are located. This zone provides connection between the interior building activity and the exterior public realm.
- **Build-To Lines:** Refer to the designated distance from a lot line where the front facade of a building must be located.
- **Build-To Percentage:** Defines the portion of a lot's frontage that must be occupied by the building facade.
- **Bulb-outs:** Also known as curb extensions, bulb-outs extend the sidewalk into the parking lane to narrow the street and provide additional pedestrian space.
- **Certificate of Appropriateness (COA):** A document certifying that a project within a locally designated historic district meets the standards outlined in state and local law for such work.
- **Colonnades:** A row of columns that support a roof and/or building.
- **Corbel:** A piece of stone, wood, or metal that juts from a wall—a type of bracket. Corbels can serve both structural and decorative purposes.
- **Cornice:** Any horizontal decorative molding that crowns a building.
- **Courtyards:** Open areas enclosed by buildings or walls, offering a semi-private space for relaxation or small gatherings.
- **Design Standards:** A framework within which builders, developers, property owners, business owners, and City government can ensure that regional and local character are preserved downtown, that materials are appropriate for their application on historic structures, and that new development is neither an inauthentic recreation of a prior time nor place.
- **Double-Hung Window:** A window with two operable sashes that slide up and down.
- **Edge Zone:** The area adjacent to the street reserved for street lighting. It acts as a buffer between on-street parking and the amenity zone allowing car doors to swing open freely without obstruction.
- **Frontages:** Refer to the portion of a lot or building facade that faces a public street or public space.
- **Galleries:** Any covered passage that is open on one side such as a portico or a colonnade.
- **Grandfathered In:** Provision in which an old rule continues to apply to some existing situations while a new rule will apply to all future cases.
- **Greens:** Small urban parks covered with grass and/or trees, providing a natural, serene setting.
- **Greenways:** Shared-use path corridor accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Grilles:** Decorative grid pattern consisting of horizontal or vertical bars that divide a larger sheet of glass into smaller panes.
- **Linear Parks:** Long, narrow parks that connects landmarks, neighborhoods, or greens.
- **Low-Impact Development (LID):** A stormwater management approach and set of practices that can reduce runoff and pollutant loadings by managing runoff as close to its source(s) as possible.

- **Major project:** Larger development projects such as rehabilitation, restoration, large additions, building relocation, demolition of principal buildings, and new construction of principal buildings.
- **Minor Project:** Smaller development projects such as small exterior building changes, repair and maintenance work, and unsubstantial site work.
- **Muntin:** A bar or rigid supporting strip between adjacent panes of glass.
- **Outdoor Amenities and/or Recreation Spaces:** Areas dedicated to recreational or outdoor activity, such as playgrounds and sports facilities.
- **Outdoor Dining:** Outdoor arrangement of furnishings intended for eating and drinking.
- **Parging:** A technique that involves applying a thin layer of mortar to a masonry surface to protect and improve its appearance.
- **Parklets:** Converted on-street parking into small dining areas with seating, tables, and greenery.
- **Pedestrian Zone:** The zone that provides space for pedestrian travel. It should be clear of obstacles and encroachments so that pedestrians can move freely along the street.
- **Plazas:** Paved public spaces near urban buildings featuring gathering areas, landscaping, seating, and occasionally shops or cafes.
- **Pocket Parks:** Mini parks nestled between buildings.
- **Primary Frontage:** The main frontage along a downtown street, or along a public open space such as a park or plaza.
- **Primary Residential Structure:** The main building on a property designed and used for living purposes, typically where the property owner or tenant resides. It is distinct from accessory structures such as garages, sheds, or guest house.
- **Public Realm:** Shared downtown community spaces such as public streets, sidewalks, parks, and plazas.
- **Rooftops:** Open terrace space on top of buildings.
- **Secondary Frontage:** The frontage on other downtown streets that are not designated as primary.
- **Setbacks:** Refer to the minimum required distance between a building structure and a lot line, ensuring adequate spacing and separation between properties and the public right-of-way.
- **Single-Hung Window:** A type of window with a fixed top sash and a bottom sash that can open.
- **Site Design:** Addresses building placement, height, and massing, as well as, open space, stormwater management, and parking locations, size, and configurations.
- **Stepbacks:** Refer to the minimum required distance between a building structure and a lot line, ensuring adequate spacing and separation between properties and the public right-of-way.
- **Streetscape:** Essentially everything that makes up the scene on a street- including the street, buildings, sidewalks, street trees, lighting and street furniture.
- **Stringcourse:** A horizontal band that runs along the exterior of a building, often made of stone or brick.
- **Tax Increment Financing District:** A geography that captures the tax value increase from before a property was redeveloped to after it is redeveloped and places those assessed funds into a pool of money that can be used for public improvement projects such as streetscapes, road improvements, and public gathering spaces within the Downtown Redevelopment District (D-1).
- **True Divided-Light Window:** A window that has multiple glass panes that are separated by muntins.



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