

Purpose and Context

The purpose of these standards is to provide the regulatory authority to ensure that new construction and renovation of existing structures is consistent with the established urban form of Downtown Topeka. These standards should be used for the design and evaluation of new public and private projects within the Downtown Master Plan area. These standards seek to balance private property rights while protecting the appearance and viability of existing investments downtown, and serve to implement the Downtown Topeka Master Plan.

- Specifically, these standards are intended to address the following objectives that are identified by the Downtown Redevelopment Plan:
- Maintenance of the street wall at the front property line;
- Enhancement of the design of street facades;
- Ensuring pedestrian compatibility between buildings and the public realm;
- Design of public spaces at a pedestrian scale;
- Creating an appealing visual interest; and
- Maintaining design integrity and compatibility with surrounding structures.

Applicability - The Urban Design Standards shall apply to all new construction and renovations of existing buildings designated for D zoning by the Downtown Master Plan, and within the D-1, D-2, and D-3 Districts, each with their own specific design and regulatory criteria. Types of applicable development activity include:

- 1. Non-residential
- 2. Mixed-Use (Commercial/Office/Residential)
- 3. Residential
- 4. Parking

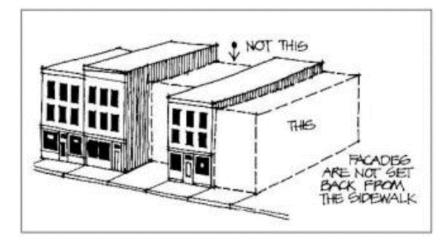
A mix of uses (including office, retail, residential, or other uses) within a given project is encouraged whether it is a single building or a redevelopment district.

No building permit shall be issued unless it is in compliance with the design guidelines which are set forth. Compliance shall be determined by the planning director by evaluating building permits, site plans and exterior elevations for conformity with the design guidelines. An appeal from the planning director's decision as to compliance with the downtown Topeka general design guidelines may be made to the board of zoning appeals pursuant to Chapter 2.45 TMC.

These standards apply to development projects within each of the D zoning districts with the exception of projects located within designated historic districts or individually listed historic properties. For these exceptions, projects must follow the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, as adopted by the amended "D" District Regulations.

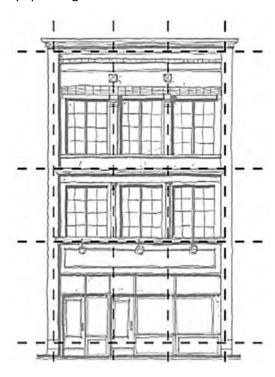
SECTION I. NON-RESIDENTIAL & MIXED-USE BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS

- **A. Site Design -** These Standards are intended to guide future development on properties within the 'D" Districts in a manner that reflects historical building patterns. These standards are not intended to restrict creative solutions, but are intended to form the framework within which new development must occur to meet the key concepts and goals for good downtown design.
 - 1. Setbacks All new non-residential development within each D District must be constructed to maintain the street wall by locating the new building adjacent to the sidewalk or front property line. This will ensure that all street-level facades fit within the established context with neighboring properties. All other street-level setbacks, plazas and widened sidewalks from the building line must be strategically placed in accordance with an overall open space plan. The new open spaces shall be located to relate to other land uses such as retail, entertainment and transit routes.



- **2. Orientation -** All primary and secondary entrances to principle buildings must face a street frontage. All loading docks or ramps must be designed to be unobtrusive and compatible with the primary use of the site, and should not be located on the major pedestrian street side of new buildings.
- **B.** Architectural Character Buildings within the "D" Districts have traditionally been built in relatively narrow configurations, with street widths typically ranging from 25 to 50 feet along the street frontage. Within these widths, buildings have been further divided into vertical units, or "bays," with each bay spanning a width of no more than 10-feet.

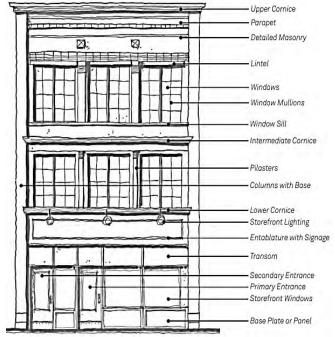
Buildings within the D District have also generally followed a horizontal demarcation to separate the floors of a building, while still accommodating an established "rhythm" for building facades. This rhythm uses a consistent level for the placement of upper-story windows above a lower storefront. and also utilizes design elements such as intermediate cornices. projecting moldings, and changes in materials to consistently define each building level within the façade.



Facades which contain expanses of wall area with no windows or entrances, and no other elements or features to provide pedestrian interest and supporting pedestrian circulation or activity represent a serious detriment to the vitality and viability of our Downtown area. The continuity of lively, inviting and visually appealing street-facing facades is extremely important in encouraging pedestrian movement, and enhancing the area's economic vitality.

- 1. Building Composition All buildings should be open and inviting in both their principal and secondary street-facing facades. All street-facing facades must reflect a consistent pattern of articulation using architectural features that create interest and long-term quality in design. Differentiating architectural features include the following:
 - Columns
 - Pilasters
 - Piers
 - Windows
 - Doorways
 - Vertical and horizontal modulations of wall planes, or
 - Vertical changes in texture or material.

Additional architectural features should be added to the corners of buildings at street intersections. Care must be taken to avoid overarticulation, which can be just as inappropriate as buildings with too little articulation.



Typical Façade Architectural Features Traditional Vertical and Horizontal Demarcation of Primary Building Facade

- 2. Materials The total square footage of all facades on new non-residential and mixed-use buildings within the "D" Downtown Districts shall utilize a combination of the building materials specified in this Chapter. All building materials selected for use within the list shall fulfill a proportionally designated role as Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary/Accent//Remainder building materials according to the following volumes:
 - Primary = >60%
 - Secondary = <40%
 - Tertiary/Accent/Remainder

Materials should be chosen that are as maintenance free as possible, and have an estimated life expectancy of greater than of 50 years. No street-facing façade may be composed exclusively in a Primary building material. Acceptable materials used within ground-level and upper-level facades for new non-residential and mixed-use buildings within the "D" districts are:

Brick Glass

Stone High quality wood

Cast Stone Synthetic wood

Synthetic stone Pre-cast concrete

Architectural metal panels* Water-managed EIFS

Stucco Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC)

Integrally colored or glazed Cement board

masonry units

High quality pre-stressed Ceramic or Terra Cotta tiles

concrete systems

Synthetic building materials, such as foam moldings and watermanaged EIFS, shall not be used unless they can be demonstrated to age in a superior manner to non-synthetic or natural materials.

- 3. Ground Level Design The design of street-facing building facades must include high quality materials and detailing which relate to the rest of the building and to adjacent buildings to convey a sense of permanence, durability, and richness in character. Buildings fronting multiple streets must be consistent in the design and character of façade treatments, including materials, scale, proportion, and architectural features.
 - a. Building Transparency A predominance of glass which assures transparency between interior activities or products and pedestrian activity on the streets and sidewalks is very important to the vitality of the pedestrian environment. All primary street-facing, ground-level facades shall contain no less than 60 percent glass. All secondary street-facing, ground-level facades shall contain no less than 40 percent glass or other transparent opening. Facades with lesser volumes of transparency shall not be placed along public streets, but may be placed along alleys and service lanes.
 - b. Building Entrances Building entrances should be considered as an integral component of a building's appearance and should relate to the overall façade in terms of its style and scale, quality of design, selection of materials and detailing. The placement and design of entrances to buildings and businesses must be readily identifiable and have a prominence on the building's street façade. Such entrances should not overpower the façade but should be designed to complement the character and features of the building's overall architecture and ground level appearance. Secondary facades along public streets should provide access using the same considerations as primary facades.
 - c. Architectural Features Decorative and functional elements and ornamentation should be used to create human scale elements on the street-level facades to further encourage openness. The maximum horizontal length of undifferentiated ground-level facades along public streets may not exceed 25feet. The use of any combination of previously listed architectural features shall be used to create a human scale within lower facade designs.

^{*}Architectural metal panels must be a higher quality material and heavier gauge than standard industrial, ribbed, pre-engineered metal panels. All fasteners for metal panels must be hidden from view, and not visible on the corresponding façade.

- **4. Upper Level Design -** The architectural design of the upper levels of new buildings, and the rehabilitation of existing buildings should be sensitive to their surrounding built and natural environment. The architecture of the existing downtown buildings provide examples of architectural themes, window rhythm, materials and forms. To enhance these rhythms, materials, and forms within the upper levels of developments within the "D" Districts, the following standards shall apply:
 - a. New construction is not required to implement any particular architectural style, but shall be designed to be compatible with the scale, forms, rhythms, and materials of surrounding structures.
 - b. The architecture of the building's upper floors and termination shall be designed to complete the building form within an overall design concept for the base, middle, and top that works in concert with architectural compatibility of the building with surrounding properties.
 - c. Height & Step-backs In areas where more than 50% of an existing street wall within the extent of the block-face remains intact, new infill construction and additional levels added to the height of existing buildings are limited to no more than 1 level greater in height than its adjacent building. For infill construction and new additions in height of two levels or more, all additional levels above the established street wall shall adhere to a step-back no less than 20-feet from the front face of the building.
 - 1) Façade Composition Windows Windows in new construction must maintain the same rhythmic proportions and configuration for windows in adjacent buildings.





- 2) Architectural Features Ornamentation, decorative, and functional elements previously listed as recommended architectural features shall be used within the upper levels of building facades to continue and enhance the visual and architectural fabric of the Downtown area. The maximum square footage of undifferentiated upper-level facades along public streets may not exceed 225 sq. ft.
- 3) Balconies Balconies on all types of non-residential and mixeduse buildings within the D-1 District must be recessed along all street-facing facades to maintain the common street wall with area buildings. Balconies on all types of non-residential and mixed -use buildings within the D-2 and D-3 Districts may project beyond the primary street-facing facades.
- 4) Parapets New parapets, with or without a cornice, should not exceed 6-feet in height above the top of the building wall, unless the roof-height slopes in one direction, making a level parapet otherwise unattainable. A parapet must include a change in height or form at least once every 50 feet. This change should align with the vertical building bays. Parapets and other roof top elements should be used to screen roof top equipment.
- 5) Cornices To preserve the continuation of existing street walls and the urban form of Downtown Topeka, the front facades of all new infill buildings and building additions must include a cornice designed in a manner that is consistent with the general height and depth of cornices on adjacent and nearby buildings.

SECTION II. PARKING FACILITY DESIGN STANDARDS - All new parking facilities within the "D" Downtown Districts shall be evaluated as either a structural parking facility, mechanical lift facility, or a surface parking facility. Sub-grade parking facilities not visible from the street right-of-way are not subject to these standards. Criteria and standards for each type of above-grade facility are listed below.

- A. Structural Parking Facility All new structural parking facilities within the "D" Districts shall be mixed-use, or shall be an accessory use to an adjacent primary facility. Parking facilities within the "D" Districts should be designed to serve as connecting links between buildings and uses within Downtown Topeka, and avoid becoming features that separate surrounding buildings and functions. As such, it is important that all parking facilities be designed in a manner consistent with the overall objectives of the "D" District Design Standards to become an amenity within the urban fabric that enhances the quality of Downtown Topeka's built environment.
 - Site Design To maintain the general character of Downtown
 Topeka, new structural parking facilities shall be consistent with the
 standards, criteria and guidelines developed for the district. The
 placement of new structural parking facilities shall be integrated
 into their surrounding environment by use of the following
 standards.
 - a. Building Height The overall height of structural parking facilities, and the height of its individual components shall be visually compatible to the height of adjacent buildings and structures to which it is directly associated.
 - b. Rhythm of the street wall The setback of a structural parking facility shall be consistent with adjacent buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

- Architectural Character Street facing facades of parking facilities should reflect and enhance the architectural character of their immediate surrounding area by employing the following standards.
 - a. Street-facing facades of new structural parking facilities shall be treated with an architectural finish and given vertical articulation and emphasis. The facade should be designed so as to visually screen cars at street level.
 - b. Street-facing facades of new structural parking facilities shall distinguish a base, middle and top by using different materials, or other methods, and also respond to the context of surrounding buildings by employing the use of similar materials, scale, massing, and rhythm of the street wall.
 - c. Sloping and open horizontal interior floors shall not be visible or expressed on the exterior face of the building.
 - d. The exterior design of all street-facing façades of a structural parking facility shall be reflect the traditional 25'-50' building width pattern within Downtown Topeka, and shall integrate vertical and horizontal architectural design elements accordingly.
 - e. The proportional width to height of openings on street facing facades on structural parking facilities shall be visually compatible to traditional building patterns in the immediate surrounding vicinity.



3. Architectural Detailing - All new structural parking facilities should be open and inviting in both their principal and secondary street-facing facades. All street-facing facades must reflect a consistent pattern of articulation using architectural details that create interest and long-term quality in design. Differentiating architectural features include the following:

Columns

Green walls or expose planters for vegetation

Pilasters

• Variations in primary, secondary, and tertiary materials

Windows

• Vertical and horizontal modulations of wall planes, or

Additional architectural features should be added to the corners of buildings at street intersections. Care must be taken to avoid overarticulation, which can be just as inappropriate as buildings with too little articulation.

- 4. Materials The total square footage of all facades on structural parking facilities within the "D" Downtown Districts shall utilize a combination of the building materials specified in this Chapter. All building materials selected for use within the list shall fulfill a designated role as Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary/Accent// Remainder building materials according to the following volumes:
 - Primary =>60%
 - Secondary =<40%
 - Tertiary/Accent/Remainder

Materials should be chosen that are as maintenance free as possible, and have an estimated life expectancy of greater than of 50 years. No street-facing façade may be composed exclusively in a Primary building material. Acceptable materials used within ground -level and upper-level facades for new structural parking facilities within the "D" districts are:

Brick Glass

Stone High quality wood

Cast Stone Synthetic wood

Synthetic stone Pre-cast concrete

Architectural metal panels* Water-managed EIFS

Stucco Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC)

Integrally colored or glazed

masonry units

Cement board

High quality pre-stressed

Ceramic or Terra Cotta tiles

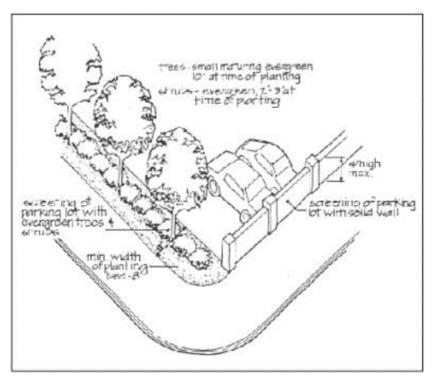
concrete systems

Synthetic building materials, such as foam moldings and watermanaged EIFS, shall not be used unless they can be demonstrated to age in a superior manner to non-synthetic or natural materials.

^{*}Architectural metal panels must be a higher quality material and heavier gauge than standard industrial, ribbed, pre-engineered metal panels. All fasteners for metal panels must be hidden from view, and not visible on the corresponding façade.

B. Surface Parking Facility

- 1. Landscaping Surface parking facilities must provide landscaping in accordance with Topeka's landscape ordinance. Landscaped buffer strips along all street frontages must be designed to continue the existing street wall, where applicable.
- 2. Setbacks & Site Design New surface parking facilities must maintain the existing street setback and street wall along all street frontages. Tools for accomplishing this can include walls, decorative fences, row of trees, hedges or any combination of these elements. The height and placement of such features should be in accordance with CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) principles.
- **3. Lighting** All lighting for surface parking facilities shall be controlled to avoid spill out on the adjacent streets creating excessive glare, and shall conform to the City of Topeka external lighting standards.



SECTION III. RESIDENTIAL BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS -

Purpose and Context: The Downtown Residential Building Design Guidelines are unique to Downtown Topeka, and are provided to guide the development of multiple-family housing to achieve a high standard for the physical and aesthetic qualities of Downtown Topeka's built, mixed-use environment. The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that new construction and renovation of existing buildings for multi-family housing is consistent with the established urban form of Downtown Topeka. New multiple-family development projects should utilize these guidelines as the designated criteria for their design, and in their evaluation. These guidelines seek to balance both private and public interest of protecting the appearance and existing investments downtown, and serve to implement the Downtown Master Plan, which is part of the City of Topeka's Comprehensive Plan.

Applicability: These standards shall apply to all newly constructed residential development, residential conversions, and all newly constructed and converted mixed-use development that incorporates residential uses. All exterior modifications to buildings that incorporate residential uses shall be consistent with these standards.

A. Residential Building Types

1. Attached Single-Family



Townhomes/Row Houses



Duplexes/Triplexes

2. Attached Single-Family



Garden Apartments



Lo-Rise Apartments (1-3 Story)



Hi-Rise Apartments (4 or more stoties)

3. Mixed Use



4. Zoning District Allocations*

	D-1	D-2	D-3
Attached Single Family	Х	Р	Х
Apartments			
Garden	Х	Р	P
Lo-Rise	P	Р	P
Hi-Rise	P	Р	P
Mixed Use	Р	P	P
P = Permitted Use			
X = Not Allowed			

- * Subject to the requirement of Chapter 18.225(k) Dwelling units located on main floors shall meet the following requirements:
- (1) The units must be subordinate in area or location to nonresidential uses on the main floor; or
- (2) The units shall be allowed in structures that were originally built for use as dwelling units, the structure has been used historically for dwelling units, or the dwelling units were converted from hospital, school, or hotel rooms.

5. Site Design

a. Height and Scale	D-1	D-2	D-3
1) Attached Single Family			
• Side-by-side	Χ	1-3 story	X
• Stacked	Χ	2-4 story	Χ
2) Garden Apartments	Χ	1-3 story	1-6 story
3) Low-rise apartment buildings	2-3 story	2-3 story	2-3 story
4) Hi-rise apartment buildings	4-10 story	4-6 story	4-10 story
5) Mixed-use apartment buildings	2-10 story	2-6 story	2-10 story

^{*} Mixed-use apartment buildings within the D-2 District are limited to corner lots along arterial streets, and may not be placed on lots interior to the block face.

b. Setbacks (maximums)	D-1	D-2	D-3
1) Attached Single Family			
Side-by-side	X	5-10 feet	Χ
• Stacked	X	5-10 feet	Χ
b. Garden Apartments	Х	0-10 feet	0-7 feet
c. Low-rise apartment buildings	0-feet	0-feet	0-feet
d. Hi-rise apartment buildings	0-feet	0-feet	0-feet
e. Mixed-use apartment buildings	0-feet	0-feet	0-feet

c. Building Orientation - The orientation for all types of multi-family residential buildings within all "D" Downtown Zoning Districts must be frontloaded, with the ground-level main entrance facing the street. Garden apartments within these districts may orient the front door toward an internal entrance common and central to the entire apartment complex.

d. Parking

- 1) Off-street parking provisions are not required for residential developments within the D-1 and D-3 District classifications. Off-street parking provisions are required within the D-2 District at a ratio of one parking space per dwelling unit. All non-residential portions of mixed-use developments shall provide parking within the D-2 District at a ratio of one parking space per 500 sq. feet of retail or office floor area.
- 2) All parking for multi-family residential buildings shall be consistent with the following type-specific parking requirements:

a. Attached Single Family	
• Side-by-side	Parking to the rear from the alley
• Stacked	Parking to the rear from the alley
b. Garden Apartments	Parking to the rear or adjacent parcel
c. Low-rise apartment buildings	Parking to the rear from the alley
d. Hi-rise apartment buildings	Sub-grade or structured parking, adjacent parcel, or on-site parking to the rear
e. Mixed-use apartment buildings	Sub-grade or structured parking, adjacent parcel,

or on-site parking to the rear

- 3) Street access and curb-cuts to those parking facilities is subject to approval by the City of Topeka Traffic Engineer, and is strongly discouraged.
- 4) Higher density residential structures are encouraged to consider on-site or adjacent structural, internal, or below ground-level parking accommodations for their buildings.
- 5) Parking requirements for all types of apartments may be met through the use of adjacent or nearby properties, provided rear access is maintained.
- e) Outdoor accommodations for New Multi-Family Apartments and Mixed-Use Development - All new multi-family apartments and mixeduse residential complexes shall provide a minimum of 50 sq. ft. of open space per dwelling unit within the building premises. Outdoor accommodations may be accrued through the use of any, or the combination of the following:
 - Balconies
 - 2) Rooftop gardens and/or common open space
 - 3) Interior ground-level courtyards

f) Pedestrian accommodations

- 1) Primary building entrances must be designed as prominent building features, easily accessible from the public street or public open space. Secondary building entrances shall be oriented to the side or rear of the building, specifically to provide easy and safe accommodation from common areas of shared open space and designated parking areas.
- 2) The upper levels of buildings 3 stories or more shall utilize materials and scale to avoid the creation of an imposing character on adjoining properties, rights-of-way, or public open spaces.

- g) Service and Utility all multi-family buildings within the "D" Districts shall conform with the following standards with regard to the provisions of services and utilities.
 - 1) All mixed-use and stand-alone apartment buildings shall be designed to access services and utilities from the rear of the properties, and shall not be front-loaded from the street right-of-way. In addition,
 - 2) Utilities should be extended to the sites in a manner complimentary to all storm water facilities and useable common open space.
 - Utilities such as electrical, cable, and transformers should be placed underground or screened from view from the public right-of-way and from adjacent properties.
 - Utility locations should not interfere with the viability of associated landscaping.
 - 5) All drive entrances for service vehicles should be located to the rear of the property and accessed from the alley.
 - 6) All roof mounted mechanical units (including evaporative coolers, HVAC units, vents, etc.) for all building types shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from the project's property lines that are adjacent to public and private streets, as well as adjacent to residential properties (unless height difference makes screening impractical). The screening methods/materials shall be consistent with and incorporated into the design of the building.
- B. Architectural Character The overall character of Downtown Topeka should be consistent in its development patterns, but should not be repetitive to the point where creativity and vibrancy are lost.

 Adherence to the following standards is, therefore, required to achieve the overall goal for downtown development as established within the "D" Downtown District regulations.

- New multi-family buildings must include at least 3 different façade treatments or architectural designs when multiple buildings are massed on sites 2-acres or larger.
- 2. Side and rear faces of all buildings must maintain the same architectural character, and employ the use of similar and compatible materials used in the design of the front façade.
- 3. The ground-level street facades of *mixed-use buildings* must follow the following standards, consistent with other building types within the "D" Districts:
 - a) Transparency All primary street-facing, ground-level walls shall contain no less than 60 percent glass. All secondary street-facing, ground-level walls should contain no less than 40 percent glass. Blank walls, or walls with lesser volumes of transparency shall not be placed along public streets, but may be placed along alleys and service lanes.
 - b) Building Entrances The placement and design of entrances to buildings and businesses must be readily identifiable and have a prominence on the building's street façade. Such entrances should not overpower the façade but should be designed to complement the character and features of the building's overall architecture and ground level appearance. Secondary facades along public streets must provide access using the same considerations as primary facades.
 - c) Architectural Detailing Decorative and functional elements and ornamentation should be used to create human scale elements on the street-level facades to further encourage openness. The maximum horizontal length and vertical height of undifferentiated ground-level facades along public streets may not exceed 25-feet.

c. Door and Window Openings

- 1. Doors and windows should be specifically designed and built to contribute to the form and architectural style of the building.
- All openings into a building must relate to one another according to a clear system of the composition and architectural style of the structure.

- D. Building Materials The total square footage of all facades on apartment and mixed-use buildings within the "D" Downtown Districts shall utilize a combination of the building materials specified in this Chapter. All building materials selected for use within the list shall fulfill a designated role as Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary/Accent/Remainder building materials according to the following volumes:
 - Primary = >60%
 - Secondary = <40%
 - Tertiary/Accent/Remainder

Materials should be chosen that are as maintenance free as possible, and have an estimated life expectancy of greater than of 50 years. No street-facing façade may be composed exclusively in a Primary building material. Acceptable materials used within ground-level and upper-level facades for apartment and mixed-use buildings within the "D" districts are:

Brick Glass

Stone High quality wood

Cast Stone Synthetic wood

Synthetic stone Pre-cast concrete

Architectural metal panels* Water-managed EIFS

Stucco Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC)

Cement board

Integrally colored or glazed

masonry units

High quality pre-stressed

Ceramic or Terra Cotta tiles

concrete systems

^{*}Architectural metal panels must be a higher quality material and heavier gauge than standard industrial, ribbed, pre-engineered metal panels. All fasteners for metal panels must be hidden from view, and not visible on the corresponding façade.

Synthetic building materials, such as water-managed EIFS, shall not be used unless they can be demonstrated to age in a superior manner to non-synthetic or natural materials.

The Planning Director may approve other building materials not listed herein.

Prohibited features on multi-family dwellings and buildings are:

- 1. Security grills over windows on exterior facades above the ground level
- 2. Reflective materials, other than windows

Architectural Detailing - A minimum of 5 of the following types of architectural details are required to be integrated into the exterior facades of all residential building types within the "D" Downtown Districts. These architectural details include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1. Horizontal or vertical recesses, projections, or off-sets
- 2. Modulating facades
- 3. Variation of roof heights
- 4. Varied roof forms
- 5. Porches
- 6. Balconies (Balconies on all types of allowable apartment buildings within the D-1 District must be recessed along all street-facing facades to maintain the common street wall with area buildings. Balconies on all types of allowable residence's within the D-2 and D-3 Districts may project beyond the primary street-facing facades
- 7. Awning or canopies at ground lever (permanent)
- 8. Structurally different building materials (i.e. stone and brick)
- 9. Courtyards
- 10. Arches
- 11. Art that is integrated into the façade
- 12. Decorative tile work, brick patterns, molding or other materials integrated into the façade
- 13. Well-defined cornice
- 14. Premium roofing materials such as tile













