LOWER DOWNTOWN
SPECIAL OVERLAY
DISTRICT

DESIGN GUIDELINES
& RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORDINANCE

October 20, 1999

based on the
Foundry Street Study
Design Guidelines and Redevelopment Plan
December 1990
LOWE R DOWNTOWN
SPECIAL OVERLAY
DISTRICT

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& RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORDINANCE

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Planning Department
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October 20, 1999

A Recommendation from the
Farmer Committee of the Mayor and Commission of Athens-Clarke County &
the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department
based on the
Foundry Street Study
Design Guidelines and Redevelopment Plan
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I. INTRODUCTION

Lower Downtown is a pivotal area for Athens-Clarke County. The area's location, between Downtown and the river, establishes it as a lynchpin. The historic use of the area, as a warehouse district, made possible the development of Athens-Clarke County into the regional center it is today. While Athens is most often thought of as a University community, our town was historically known as the "Manchester of the South". As a center of textile production and the destination for the first railroad in Georgia, Athens was an important part of the cotton economy of the south. The remaining warehouses and railroad-related structures articulate that history.

Special District: A Special District is distinguished by its architecture, history, current use, environmental considerations, and community expectations and investment.

The area possesses a special character that speaks to that history. These special characteristics of our towns, districts and neighborhoods are significant in defining our communities. "Special" takes on a more formal meaning: It implies that a neighborhood [or district] not only possesses these elements, but is distinguished by one or more of them.¹ It is often advantageous, in the case of special districts, to address the peculiar aspects of the area, its development and its potential through a tailored approach.

For Lower Downtown, because of the plethora of unusual characteristics within the district, a "Special District Overlay" zone is recommended to assure appropriate development within the area. These unusual characteristics include the severe topographic changes as the land declines from the Downtown to the Oconee River, the architectural

¹This definition of "Special District" was taken from Hindsight and Foresight: Planning to Protect and Guide Special Neighborhoods prepared by New York City in 1990.
transition from the commercial and institutional buildings downtown to the utilitarian warehouses of Foundry Street, existing community investment, such as the Classic Center, and future community investment in the district, including the proposed construction of the Multi-modal Center and the development of the Oconee River Greenway.

Special District Overlay: A Zoning classification to address and respond to the characteristics and management problems of a Special District. Within each individual district, uses may be limited or expanded from the ‘baseline’ classification, and review of the design of new construction or alterations to existing buildings is required. This review is accomplished by applying the concepts found in the Design Guidelines developed specifically for that district.
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Athenian Oath

In front of the Classic Center, there is placed a statue of Athena, a Greek goddess who was believed to be the protector of cities. This oath, the Athenian Oath, was taken by the youth of Athens when they reached the age of seventeen and is carved below the statue. The final phrase, recognizing the importance of the aesthetics of the city, promising to leave the city more beautiful than before, has particular relevance for this report.

We will never bring disgrace on this our city by an act of dishonesty or cowardice.

We will fight for the ideals and sacred things of the City both alone and with many.

We will revere and obey the City’s laws and will do our best to incite a like reverence and respect in those above us who are prone to annul them or set them at naught.

We will strive increasingly to quicken the public’s sense of civic duty.

Thus in all these ways we will transmit this City, not only not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.
III. CHARACTERISTICS OF LOWER DOWNTOWN

A. BOUNDARIES

Lower Downtown is located on the eastern edge of Downtown Athens. The District is roughly bounded by Thomas Street to the west, East Broad Street to the south, the Oconee River to the east, and North Avenue to the north. Properties on both sides of these streets form important corridors and are included within the district boundaries. Doing so recognizes the importance of planning streets as corridors and the necessity for development to transition between the District and the surrounding area. A transition is required between the Downtown District and the Lower Downtown District and between the Oconee River and the Lower Downtown District to assure that new construction knits together the two distinct areas. A map of the district area has been prepared to further illustrate the District boundaries (see District Boundary Map page 3).
B. COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

I. Classic Center: the Classic Center merits protection from insensitive design as it is a major public investment. The design of the Classic Center references the architecture of the Downtown and of the historic warehouses. It is in the interest of the community as a whole to protect this resource from incompatible design.

It is expected that future public projects will be located within this area. The design of these projects should incorporate the attached design guidelines, as well as be protected by them.

♦ Athens-Clarke County Multi-modal Center
♦ Oconee River Greenway (Heritage Trail)
♦ Parking Deck for the Classic Center

Significant private investment, as well, has occurred in the area and is partially evidenced by the rehabilitation of the Farmers Hardware Building, and the construction of the Banner Herald Building.

C. LAND USE

The predominate land uses in the area are institutional, commercial and industrial. Some residential uses occur, usually secondary to a principle use such as commercial or office. The existing uses, for the most part, are allowed uses under the current zoning classification of Central Business District. (See Land Use Map page 5) However, not all of the existing land uses are compatible with the new development (particularly the function of the Classic Center) or with the community expectations created by proposed future government development in the area (such as the proposed multi-modal center). The proposed Special District Overlay should encourage the development of compatible uses to the new and expected development, and restrict the opportunity for additional industrial and manufacturing activities to locate within the district. In contrast, increasing commercial and residential re-development is to be encouraged by limiting the number and intensity of conflicting industrial uses. The Lower Downtown redevelopment area must be of sufficient size, variety and amenity to create a sense of place and attract people to the area.
Lower Downtown has a long tradition of providing manufacturing and warehousing services to Athens, dating back to the city's genesis. The installation of rail service in the area helped to stimulate its development in the early part of the century into an important warehousing and manufacturing district. It is interesting to note that it is the reduction in rail transportation and the resulting transfer of former railroad owned property that offers an opportunity to redevelop this area in a manner that will support the community and the district's continuing economic growth.

D. TOPOGRAPHY

The Lower Downtown District is located on the shoulder of a prominent ridge overlooking the Oconee river. At the summit of this ridge, lies the primary core of Downtown Athens. The elevation at the ridge at Thomas Street is approximately 725 feet above MSL (Mean Sea Level). From this elevation as one is standing to the east of the Fire Hall in the Classic Center there exists an almost unobstructed view across the North Oconee River, which lies approximately 600 feet above MSL. These dramatic changes in elevation result in slopes ranging from 7.5 to 11.5 percent (see Topography Map page 7).

This explains why the major streets and rail lines within the district run parallel to the slope within the Lower Downtown district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLOPES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To provide some perspective on the slope in the Lower Downtown - which ranges from 7.5 % - 11.5 % - the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) recommends the following maximum slopes for Multi-Use paths:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Distances up to</th>
<th>Maximum Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 meters</td>
<td>11 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 meters</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 meters</td>
<td>9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 meters</td>
<td>8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 meters</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700 feet (approx. 213 meters)</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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E. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Roads: Willow Street provides access through the area on its eastern side, connecting North Avenue and East Broad Street. Thomas Street, which defines the western boundary of the District and the eastern edge of Downtown, also connects North Avenue with Broad Street. The area is also serviced by Foundry Street, Strong Avenue, Dougherty Street, and Hancock Avenue.

Rail: It is anticipated that rail traffic will increase in the district, with the multi-modal center. Commuter rail traffic will be concentrated on one line. Surplus rail property in the district may be abandoned and become available to the city for acquisition.

Pedestrian: Pedestrian facilities within the district are limited. In order to fulfill any of the expectations for the area to increase commercial development and providing for the incorporation of walking as an easy mode of transport to and from the multi-modal center, provisions must be made for the pedestrian. As Athens-Clarke County has not, previously, established pedestrian amenities in this area, like sidewalks. It is recommended that future development be setback from the street a sufficient distance to construct pedestrian amenities, while maintaining the appearance of a ‘zero’ lot line development to assure the continuation of the urban design characteristics established by historic, Key Buildings within the district.
F. NATIONAL REGISTER and LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

National Register: A portion of the Lower Downtown district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Athens Warehouse Historic District in 1988. Other National Register properties in the study area include the Downtown Athens Historic District and the Church Waddell Brumby House. (See Map of Historic Districts on 10) As a result of this listing, the contributing buildings may be eligible for Federal and State Tax incentive programs for their rehabilitation. Additionally, this listing calls attention to the requirement for Federal 106 review to occur for any action that would effect the historic district and which requires either Federal permits or utilizes Federal funds.

Local Designation: A number of buildings within the Lower Downtown are designated under the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Ordinance. The Clarke County Courthouse, the F.M. Coker Building, the Welcome Center, and the Franklin Hotel are all individually protected by the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Other buildings within the Lower Downtown are eligible for designation, for example the Farmers’ Hardware Building and the Fire Hall. Entire areas, such as Athens Downtown Historic District, Pottery Town Historic District and the Athens Warehouse Historic District are eligible for local designation, as well. These buildings’ and districts’ inclusion or partial inclusion within the boundaries of the Lower Downtown Special Overlay District does not provide them the protection offered by local designation, nor are such designations mutually exclusive or redundant. The local designation of eligible properties under the Historic Preservation Ordinance is encouraged. Property designated under the Local Historic Preservation Ordinance will be subject to the review of both the Lower Downtown Design Standards and the review of the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Commission. Design must meet the criteria established by both. If there is a design conflict between the two sets of standards, then the decision of the Historic Preservation Commission shall hold forth.
G. LAND OWNERSHIP

Land ownership should have little effect on the design to be executed on the property. However, the amount of land currently owned by Athens-Clarke County within the district further demonstrates the community’s fiscal interest in Lower Downtown, and provides some measure of control in shaping the future of the district. (See Land Ownership Map page 12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner Classification</th>
<th>Number of Acres</th>
<th>Approximate Percentage of total acreage in Lower Downtown</th>
<th>Number of parcels by classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Georgia</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.93%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railroads</td>
<td>36.50</td>
<td>29.68%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athens-Clarke County</td>
<td>20.61</td>
<td>16.76%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Renewal (Athens-Clarke County)</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>3.98%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.93%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Ownership</td>
<td>51.74</td>
<td>42.08%</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>122.97</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 9

Lower Downtown Special Overlay District
Land Ownership

- federal government
- local government
- private
- University of Georgia
- railroad right-of-way
- utilities

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Produced by the GIS/Geographic Division
Athens-Clarke County Planning Department
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H. ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

The architectural character of Lower Downtown is established by brick warehouse buildings dating from the turn of the century. These buildings are identified on the Key Buildings Map. Within the following Design Guidelines these buildings are referred to as Key Buildings. It is these buildings that provide the point of origin for new construction and reference for the evaluation and review of new construction and changes to existing buildings. Demolition of these buildings would diminish the architectural context of the district, and destroy architectural reference points. Retention of these authentic historic buildings is essential as they provide legitimacy to the overall design scheme.

Key Building: One of the historic buildings located within Lower Downtown that establish the architectural profile for the district. These buildings identified as such on Key Buildings Map p. 14. Photos of are also found as Figures: 10, 11, 12

Figure 10
Photo of Farmer’s Hardware Building (a Key Building)

Figure 11
Photo of Fire Hall (a Key Building)

Figure 12
Photo of the Classic Center (a Key Building)
Lower Downtown Special Overlay District

Key Buildings

key buildings
I. OTHER DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

While all of these aspects characterize the Lower Downtown District, not all of them can be addressed with the Special District Overlay. Case in point: the Design Guidelines and the Special Overlay District do not establish the location of the multi-modal center, they articulate the design vocabulary of its construction: they do not determine the location or engineering of streets, rather they hold new construction and design to a standard that will encourage pedestrian access along those streets.

In order to assure the continued redevelopment of this area, the Planning Department would encourage that other major infrastructure improvement decisions be made in a timely manner. One of the major barriers to development within this area is uncertainty surrounding planned government projects. Still, it is inappropriate, in this report, to make recommendations regarding community projects in this area other than to encourage their design to be consistent with these Design Guidelines.
IV. DISCUSSION OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW OF PROJECTS

The 1990 Foundry Street Study, and practically every analysis of this area prepared over the past ten years, has recommended the development of Design Guidelines for the Lower Downtown District. The following Design Guidelines, are offered for consideration:

A. PURPOSE

The Architectural Character of Lower Downtown is defined by its existing Key Buildings. A map of buildings that contribute to this character (Key Buildings Map p. 14) has been prepared. When preparing plans for new construction and alterations within Lower Downtown, one should reference these buildings. There are buildings, particularly some recently constructed, that do not contribute to the character of the district and even may detract from the character of the district. These buildings should not be referenced in designs for new construction or additions. The following design principles establish the means and the framework to achieve this purpose. They are equally significant and, as such, not listed in any intentional order.

B. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Any proposed new construction, demolition or alteration shall be evaluated against the following criteria:

2. Proposed projects shall not have a negative visual effect on the Classic Center, and those having any visual impact on the Center, shall be compatible in terms of design, scale, massing, and materials.

3. Proposed projects shall not have a negative effect on the established architectural character of the historic area of the Lower Downtown and shall be compatible in terms of design, scale, massing and materials.

4. Proposed projects shall not have a negative effect on the views from the property up-grade (west) of the proposed development.

5. Proposed projects shall not have a negative effect on the appearance of the Oconee River or the Oconee River Greenway
C. THE ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER OF NEW CONSTRUCTION

It is recognized that much of the new construction in this district will occur on vacant land, east of the Foundry Street warehouses and west of the river. The warehouse buildings will act as a point of origin for the architectural styles of new construction in this area. All new design (with special considerations in the sub-zones) should utilize the architectural vocabulary established by the historic warehouse architecture (Key Buildings). A map has been prepared identifying the buildings currently articulated with this architectural vocabulary. (See Key Building Map page 14) This area is urban in character, but it should not replicate the commercial architectural character of the Downtown, except within the Thomas Street Corridor.

1. Sub-zones (See Sub-zone Map on page 18)

Thomas Street Corridor: For the corridor established by Thomas Street, the architecture should reflect the commercial and civic architecture of the Downtown, as well as serve as a transitional area from the Downtown Historic District into the more industrial character of the area from Foundry Street to the river. (The boundaries of this sub-zone are the overlay district boundary to the west and the centerline of Thomas Street.)

River/Greenway: The greenway and the Oconee River are important features of the area, as well. The architecture abutting these features should provide a transition from the park-like character of the river and greenway to the built, urban area of Lower Downtown. The boundary of this sub-zone follows the topographic line at 650 feet MSL on the west and the river on the east which encompasses the Flood Plain Area (See Floodplain Map on page 19).
Additional Design considerations apply within the two Sub-zones of the district (Thomas Street Corridor, River / Greenway) and facilitate the transition from the Downtown to Lower Downtown, and from the River and Greenway park and environmental areas to Lower Downtown.

2. Orientation

The topography of the district dictates that the development should occur in tiers. Buildings on the same contour, on the same level, should relate to one another. New construction should cascade down from the Athens Downtown District to the Oconee River. Doing so limits the need to cut and fill, facilitates the development of infrastructure such as water and sewer, provides a more legible landscape, and protects the viewshed of existing buildings and future designs. Consequently, the relationships between neighboring buildings along the north-south alignment, (within the tier) are not going to be the same as the relationships between buildings from east to west (from tier to tier).

The development of the area in tiers results in new construction which shall be oriented to the east and west. Buildings on corner lots may have facades or articulated elevations, facing each street, and designed primarily with a north/south orientation. As a result, buildings may have as many as three facades. This requirement applies directly to the Broad Street Corridor and the North Avenue Corridor. However, this also means that buildings which are constructed on through lots will need to have a double facade, one facing each street. This is a unique opportunity for a building to have two personalities, and is not detrimental.

Zero lot line setbacks from public streets and pedestrian facilities are a necessity. Locating a building on a site in this manner will perpetuate the urban character of the downtown and the traditional setback of the Key Buildings and warehouses.
3. Height

The maximum height of buildings within the Central Business District (CBD) is seventy-five (75) feet as per the Athens-Clarke County Zoning Ordinance. It is staff's understanding that this height was set as a maximum because the ladders owned by Athens-Clarke County Fire Department would only reach a height of seventy-five feet. However, other factors influence the appropriate height of buildings within the Lower Downtown District. Building heights reaching seventy-five feet are appropriate only within the Thomas Street Corridor Sub-area of the Lower Downtown District.

Typical height of buildings within the Lower Downtown District is one to three stories. Often, due to the topography, a building will gain a story on the east elevation. Outside of the Thomas Street Corridor, the following restrictions are appropriate:

♦ **Tier Development:** Due to the value of the views to the river area and access to both air and light within the district, the maximum height of buildings within the Lower Downtown District should not impair the view of the river valley. (Photo of this view is Figure 17) Again, the height of the buildings shall reflect the 'tier development' down the slope from the Downtown District to the river. Consequently, the height of buildings on the west side of the tier shall have a relationship to the width of the street of 1:1. The depth of these buildings shall have a relationship to the height of the western elevation of no more that 3:1. At the street level on the eastern elevation, the height shall not exceed the width of that street more than 2:1. Because of the severity of the topography, it is recognized that the height of the eastern elevation may be greater, but the massing of a taller building should be broken with stepped terraces. No continuous elevation should exceed a 4:1 ratio in relation to the western elevation of the building on the opposite side of the street, or to the east/west. In order to achieve this, buildings may have a stepped design. Please refer to Figure 16 for an illustration of this proportional relationship.

♦ **Relative Height:** Within a tier, the height of neighboring buildings shall not differ from the existing buildings by more or less that 20%.

♦ **NOTE:** It is understood that the quantification of design has certain limitations. Consequently, applicants may submit designs that do not meet these ratios for review by the Planning Commissions but which achieve the goal of protecting the views.
Figure 16
Proportions of New Construction

$X, Y =$ Street width

W $\rightarrow$ E (to river)
**Relationship to the Classic Center:** The Classic Center was designed to respect the height of the existing downtown architectural fabric. Buildings should maintain that transition in mass and scale, particularly along Thomas Street. This would, in part, protect the view from the Classic Center of downtown.

View of the 1912 Fire Hall #1 and the Classic Center from Washington Street should remain unobstructed (See photo 17). The Fire Hall exists as a terminus of views down Washington Street and is an integral part of the Downtown Fabric. This was a prime consideration during the design of the Classic Center which preserved that building. As the architecture of the Classic Center was intended to respect the integrity of Fire Hall #1, so should any new construction respect the architectural integrity of the Classic Center.

4. **Massing**

The Massing within the Lower Downtown has, in most cases, been a response to the topography and a transition from the downtown. Consequently, the buildings within the district have, for the most part, a horizontal emphasis running parallel to the river. The plans are linear, often with dual entrances on the east to the river and on the west to downtown. The dual nature was also utilitarian. Such is the case of the Foundry Street warehouse with one elevation serving the railroad and one accessing the street. One can assume that this massing most readily took advantage of the terraces of buildable land dictated by the topography.

New construction may have larger square footage, but should still maintain the horizontal emphasis and linear massing down the slope. Massing should be broken in height, following the terrain. (See Figure 16)
5. Architectural Detailing

The architecture of the Classic Center references the historic architecture within Lower Downtown. The most obvious evidence of this fact is the incorporation of Fire Hall #1 into the overall architectural scheme of the convention center. The Classic Center architectural detailing (see Figure 18) references the round arch found at the entrance of the Farmer's Hardware Building (see Figure 19), and the brick ornamentation, particularly the use of brick corbeling to adorn the cornices and to articulate bays within the building, is found in the Victorian-era Commercial architecture of the surrounding commercial and warehouse buildings.

As well, the architecture of the F.M. Coker Building (see Figure 21) incorporates the segmental arched windows, drip moldings and pedimented cornice. Lower Downtown contains many commercial buildings that display similar details, albeit with less exuberance.

6. Fenestration / Windows

Buildings within Lower Downtown have fenestration that has been divided by mullions and muntins. (See Figure 20) windows are industrial in character and are accented by brick, stone or stucco sills, and lintels.
**Blank Walls** - the maximum length of blank exterior building wall along the streetfront shall not exceed fifteen (15) linear feet. A blank exterior building wall is any wall unbroken to the height of nine (9) feet by either: 1) a doorway; or 2) a window of at least five (5) square feet using design criteria established within these provisions. Extensive blank walls have a negative effect on the pedestrian environment; unfortunately, one of the best examples of this impact is to the rear (east) of the Classic Center. (See Figure 22)

**Sides of Buildings** - if the side of a building is readily visible then the provisions regarding the Blank Walls shall apply. However, it is recognized that, for instance, in the case of phased construction, it may be necessary to leave a blank side wall (particularly in buildings where a shared wall is anticipated in future construction). In these instances only, the design of the building should incorporate architectural details, plants, landscape, or public art that will reduce the visible effect of the blank wall. For instance, a wall mural may be painted on the visible wall. These murals may include the logo for the business located within the structure. This provision allows for larger signs, provided that they are painted on the building, than allowed under the current Athens-Clarke County Sign Ordinance, and is a special provision of this Special District Overlay zone. These provisions do not apply to corner lots, as the justification for the blank wall (i.e., impending construction) does not exist.

7. **Entrances**

- Often entrances to existing buildings are of a large scale, particularly when compared to commercial structures within the downtown. Outside of the Thomas Street Corridor, entrances should follow this scale and reference the existing loading docks found on the warehouse buildings. While the design of the entrances should, whenever possible, be maintained in existing ‘key’ buildings, the design of entrances within new construction should not ‘imitate’ the historic loading docks. New design that mocks historic entrances are dishonest - unless it is to facilitate a legitimate use (such as deliveries).
8. Roofs

- The typical roof treatment found within the district is a flat roof with parapets or a parapet wall. Parapets are an important decorative feature within the district and function to obscure the flat roofs from the street, as well as for their effect on the massing of the building.

There are examples of front gabled roofs within the district. In most instances, a parapet wall extends above the gable peak, giving the facade the appearance of a building with a flat roof.

- The materials of a flat roof may vary, and because the view from the street is obscured, the material may be utilitarian in nature. However, as much as possible, the simple form should be uncomplicated by the clutter of mechanical systems.

Due to the topology of Lower Downtown, the appearance of the roofs of a building within this area are of heightened importance. Consequently, mechanical systems if located on the rooftops, should be enclosed, if possible, to limit their impact on the view of the river valley from buildings to the west.

- New construction should recognize the importance of parapets, including the sculpted or shaped parapets found on Key Buildings within the district, in regards to massing and height. It may be appropriate for new construction to incorporate parapets or parapet walls into its design.
9. Materials

An important aspect of compatible design is the materials used to execute those designs.

♦ Brick is the primary construction material of Key Buildings within Lower Downtown. Consequently, brick -- with various treatments (painted, etc.) is an acceptable construction material.

♦ Metal is an appropriate construction material for architectural details and structural systems. Within the Lower Downtown district window sashes, fencing, cast iron railing on Foundry Street, and roofs were typically constructed utilizing metal. New construction may utilize metal in a similar manner. Metal may be painted or left exposed. The combination of brick and metal building materials are defining characteristics of the industrial nature of the Lower Downtown district.

♦ Stucco is an appropriate material within the Lower Downtown area- accents and foundation - not for use as primary building material

The use of incompatible materials will have significant negative visual effect on the Lower Downtown district. The following materials are not encouraged

♦ Structural Glass and Glass Curtain Walls are not currently found within the Lower Downtown district. This material creates a distinctively modern appearance which conflicts with the architectural character of the Lower Downtown district.

♦ Imitative stucco material (such as Dri-vet) are inappropriate materials for construction within the Lower Downtown District.

♦ Unlike the majority of the districts within Athens-Clarke County, wood is not an appropriate construction material, except for use as an accent.

Note: Utilizing these materials, particularly if technology has improved or changed the appearance of these materials, may be an option. As a rule they are discouraged, but if the design mitigates their effect on the district, consideration will be given to that fact.
10. Style

The pervasive architectural style within the district is industrial -- not high architectural styles. The style of architecture within this area reflects the utilitarian nature of the buildings and the function of the area as Athens-Clarke County's warehouse district. The most ornate of the buildings incorporates some detailing of Commercial Victorian-era architecture. In contrast, the elaborate details found on Downtown Commercial buildings would only be appropriate within the corridor of Thomas Street, as it provides the transition between downtown and Lower Downtown. Within Lower Downtown, other commercial/industrial styles may be compatible. However, the more residential styles (Georgian, Federal, etc...) and the vernacular buildings found on Broad Street at Pottery Street are not appropriate and should not be encouraged. The notable exception to this rule, of course, are the Welcome Center (see Figure 23) and the Franklin Hotel.

11. Parking Lots

Surface parking lots are not encouraged within the district. The public transportation facilities planned for this area and the lenient requirements for parking within the Central Business District, lessen the need for parking. If street parking is required, limited parking (perpendicular parking or parallel parking) would be encouraged on one side of the street. Parking lots, where they exist, should be constructed so that the visual line of the tier (buildings running linearly north/south in a tier) shall be continued. This can be accomplished with landscaping, or structures. The depth (east/west) of the parking lot shall not exceed the width of the buildings within that tier. The width (north/south) of the parking lot shall not exceed the width of the street by a ratio of 3:1. (If the parking lot is between two streets with differing widths, the narrower of the two shall be utilized to judge this ratio). Parking decks or other interior parking structures shall be subject to the guidelines for new construction.
12. Signs

All signs shall be flat and located against the building wall or painted directly on the building. Projecting signs are not encouraged. Temporary signs, banners, are allowed only with appropriate permits. Internally lit, backlit and neon signs are allowed within Lower Downtown as long as they are placed flat against the wall. Billboards or other free-standing signs, with the exception of governmental signs for safety reasons and street signage, are not permitted. As with the zoning ordinance, the sign ordinance provisions are applicable except for the special provisions of the Special District Overlay.

D. CHANGES TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

1. Discordant Buildings

Changes to Discordant Buildings should be evaluated against the same criteria as new construction for their potential impact on the architectural character of Lower Downtown. (See photos 24, 25, 26 for examples of discordant buildings) There is not significant merit to retain existing buildings, unless they are identified as having the historic, or architectural character that currently establishes the Lower Downtown and, for the purposes of this document, identified as a Key Building (see Key Buildings Map page 14 and photos 10, 11, 12).

2. Demolitions

The impact of a demolition of a discordant building is not of significance to the character of Lower Downtown unless the remaining property is to remain vacant or become the location of a parking lot. The proportion of vacant lot and parking lots to land with built improvements should be kept to a minimum. Considering the number of demolitions in the area, either purposeful or through fire or accident, the Maintenance: Repair / in-kind repair of deteriorated portions of the building. Like materials should be replaced with like materials. (See Appendix One: Changes to and Maintenance of Buildings for examples of work considered Maintenance)

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number of vacant and unbuilt lots at this time is excessive and new construction, rather than further demolition, would contribute to the health and success of the district. Buildings create the pedestrian and urban character of the district. Vacant and unimproved land, visible parking areas, and parked cars detract from this character.

3. Key Buildings

Proposed changes to Key Buildings should be evaluated against the Criteria for New Construction and for its effect on the historic architectural character of the individual building (see Key Building Map page 14 and photos 10, 11, 12).
V. DISCUSSION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE ORDINANCE

The Planning Department staff has developed ordinance language for discussion purposes and it is attached as Appendix 2. The Athens-Clarke County Attorney's Office is currently reviewing this proposed ordinance language. Consequently, it should be used for discussion purposes only.

It should also be noted that the proposed Special District Overlay is not the same as designating the area under the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Ordinance for the following reasons:

1) as proposed, the Special District Overlay addresses, among other things, land use

2) the Special District Overlay will be administered by the Athens-Clarke County Planning Commission (as opposed to the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Commission).
VI. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study revisits familiar ground. The Lower Downtown area has been examined and planned by several different organizations, professionals, and disciplines for the past ten years. In particular, our recommendations drew from the Foundry Street Study: Design Guidelines and Redevelopment Plan by the Athens-Clarke County Planning Commission (December 1990) and the Design Quality in Historic Areas: National Trust Design Quality Panels’s study of the Foundry Street Historic District, Athens, Georgia (October 24 & 25, 1989).

Other cities have addressed similar issues within their communities, and their work has been of assistance in preparing the Design Guidelines and the Special District Overlay provisions for the Lower Downtown. New York City prepared Hindsight and Foresight: Planning to Protect and Guide Special Neighborhoods in 1990. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as well, has enacted the Third Ward Design Guidelines also in 1990.
VII. APPENDIX ONE
PROPOSED ORDINANCE LANGUAGE

A. SPECIAL DISTRICT OVERLAYS

1. Purpose and Intent: The purpose of the Special District Overlay(s) established in the following sections is to protect and enhance certain specific lands and structures which, by virtue of their type or location, have characteristics which are distinct from lands and structures outside such overlay districts. It is the intent of the Mayor and Chair and Commission to permit, insofar as possible, those uses and structures which would otherwise be permitted, provided that reasonable and necessary conditions are met which insure the protection and enhancement of said lands and structures. It is the further intent of the Mayor and Chair and Commission of Athens-Clarke County to specifically protect and enhance the following:

(1) Lower Downtown District
(2) [future Special District Overlays, as they are identified, will be listed in this location.]

2. General Standards: The Special District Overlays established in this Ordinance operate by establishing design guidelines to effectuate the purpose of the district. They supersede the regulations of the underlying zoning designation, as appropriate. In the event of a conflict between the underlying zoning designation and the Special District Overlay, the provisions of the Special District Overlay shall apply.

Land lying within a Special District shall remain part of the underlying zoning designation established by other provisions of the Athens-Clarke County Zoning Ordinance, and may, in addition, lie in one or more overlay districts in accordance with the designation of each.

3. Creation of Special District Overlay: Amendments to this ordinance, or to the zoning map, shall be adopted in accordance with the provisions in (section) upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission. Every recommendation for the creation of a Special District Overlay, or addition of land thereto, shall address the following, as applicable:
c. A statement of purpose shall specify the nature of the special and substantial public interest and public welfare involved and objectives to be promoted by creation of the Special District Overlay and imposition of the regulations and design guidelines proposed therefore.

d. Proposed district boundaries shall be depicted on one or more maps which shall also display all other zoning districts applicable to the property proposed for inclusion in the district.

e. Regulations or Design Guidelines proposed to promote the special purposes of the Special District.

f. Regulations or Design Guidelines for any Special District shall be designed to reasonably promote the purposes of the district, and may require or address any of the following, in addition to or in lieu of other regulations affecting property within the Special District.

1. Protection of features designated as being of special concern within the district;

2. Mixtures or limitations of permitted uses;

3. Special performance standards and development regulations;

4. Other matters as appropriate to promote the special public interests of the district.

g. Regulations or Design Guidelines for any Special District Overlay may require special review of development plans by the Director of the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department, the Director of the Athens-Clarke County Department of Transportation and Public Works Department, the Athens-Clarke County Planning Commission, or other offices or agencies of Athens-Clarke County, generally within the district or for specified classes of uses within the district.

h. Mapping: Upon approval of a Special District Overlay, a map of the district boundaries shall be incorporated into the Zoning Maps of Athens-Clarke County.

i. In cases where the application of this ordinance covers work which requires the issuance of a building permit, subdivision approval, land disturbing permit or other Athens-Clarke County permit, the rejection of an application shall be binding upon the Athens-Clarke County official charged with issuing said permits and, in such a case, no permit shall be issued or approval given.
4. Projects located within a district or area designated under the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Ordinance shall be reviewed by the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Commission and be subject to their approval as well as meeting the criteria established by the Lower Downtown Special District. In the event of a conflict between the Lower Downtown Special Overlay District regulations and the decision of the Historic Preservation Commission, the decision of the Historic Preservation Commission shall take precedence.
B. LOWER DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

1. **Purpose and Intent:** The purpose of the Lower Downtown District is to encourage development that 1) is compatible to the Classic Center, 2) acts as a transition from the Oconee River to Athens Downtown district 3) is compatible to the existing architectural character of the warehouse buildings within the Lower Downtown District 4) utilizes the existing topography, while not obscuring the views, light or air from previous or future development within Lower Downtown, and which 5) utilizes the benefits, such as reduced need for parking spaces, which are realized from the proximity to the Multi-modal Center (as planned).

2. **Boundaries:** The regulations and design guidelines apply to the Lower Downtown District. The boundaries of this district are shown on the attached Map (District Boundary Map) and on the Official Zoning Map. The Lower Downtown District has two Sub-zones (Thomas Street Corridor and Oconee River / Greenway) that are also identified on the Map.

3. **Base Zoning:** The regulations of this chapter supersede conflicting provisions of the underlaying zones or other regulations of this ordinance.

4. **Design Guidelines:** The Design Guidelines for the Lower Downtown District are adopted, by reference. Any subsequent amendments or changes to the Guidelines shall be adopted following the procedure for zoning amendments to existing ordinances.

All plans for alterations to existing buildings and for new construction proposed within the Lower Downtown District shall be submitted to the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department for review. If the plans, in the opinion of the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department Director, are for work that may be approved by staff, they are evaluated against the criteria established in the Design Guidelines. The Planning Director may approve, approve with conditions or deny the application. Appeals to decisions of the Planning Director shall be sent to the Planning Commission.

If the plans are for work of such a nature that they require Planning Commission review, the Planning Commission, likewise, shall utilize the Lower
Downtown Design Guidelines as criteria for their evaluation of the project and its ability to meet the above stated goals. The Planning Commission may approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application for approval. The decision of the Planning Commission shall be the final decision of the County on appeals regarding development within the Lower Downtown Special District, unless otherwise requested by the Mayor and Chair and Commission.

A list of projects appropriate for staff approvals, and those requiring full Planning Commission review is provided in the Design Guidelines, Appendix One. This chart also lists projects that qualify as Maintenance and which do not require the review of the Planning Department Director or the Planning Commission. The final determination of the appropriateness of staff review for Changes to Existing Buildings is made by the Planning Department Director.
C. DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW OF PROJECTS

I. Purpose: The Architectural Character of Lower Downtown is defined by its Key Buildings and by the Classic Center. A map of buildings that contribute to this character (Key Building Map p. 46) is adopted by reference. It is the purpose of these Design Guidelines to assure that new construction; and changes to existing buildings are compatible to the architecture of the Key Buildings and the Classic Center by following these Design Principles:

DESIGN PRINCIPLES: Any proposed new construction, demolition or alteration shall be evaluated against the following criteria, utilizing the design guidelines regarding New Construction. If the characteristics of the site are such that strict application of these standards is not appropriate, then the Planning Commission shall review the application utilizing the following principles:

1. Proposed projects shall not have a negative visual effect on the Classic Center, and those having any visual impact on the Center, shall be compatible in terms of design, scale, massing, and materials.

2. Proposed projects shall not have a negative effect on the established architectural character of the historic area of the Lower Downtown and shall be compatible in terms of design, scale, massing and materials.

3. Proposed projects shall not have a negative effect on the views from the property upgrade (west) of the proposed development.

4. Proposed projects shall not have a negative effect on the Oconee River or the Oconee River Greenway.
2. **New Construction and Changes:** All construction (with special considerations in the sub-zones) should utilize the architectural vocabulary (Orientation, Height, Massing, Architectural Detailing, Fenestration, Entrances, Roofs, Materials, Style, Parking Lots, and Signs) established by the Key Buildings. A map identifying the Key Buildings is adopted as referenced as Figure 28 (page 46).

3. **Sub-zones:**

**Thomas Street Corridor:** For the corridor established by Thomas Street, the architecture should reflect the transition from the Downtown Historic District into the more industrial character of the area from Foundry Street to the river by referencing the Key Buildings located within the respective Sub-zones. The boundaries of this sub-zone are the overlay district boundary to the west and the centerline of Thomas Street.

**River/Greenway:** The greenway and the Oconee River are important features of the area, as well. The architecture abutting these features should provide a transition from the park-like character of the river and greenway to the built, urban area of Lower Downtown. The boundary of this sub-zone follows the topographic line at 650 feet MSL on the west and the river on the east which encompasses the Flood Plain Area.

4. **Orientation:** The topography of the district dictates that the development should occur in tiers. New construction shall be oriented to the east and west. Buildings on corner lots may have facades or articulated elevations, facing each street, and be designed primarily with a north/south orientation. This requirement applies directly to the Broad Street Corridor and the North Avenue Corridor. As a result, buildings constructed on through lots must present a double facade, one facing each street.

Zero lot line setbacks from public streets and pedestrian facilities are required for both public and private streets.
5. **Height:**

**Tier Development:** In order to preserve the views to the river area and access to both air and light within the district, the maximum height of buildings within the Lower Downtown District should not impair the view of the river valley. To that end, the height of buildings on the west side of the tier shall have a relationship to the width of the street of 1:1. The depth of these buildings shall have a relationship to the height of the western elevation of no more than 3:1. At the street level on the eastern elevation, the height shall not exceed the width of that street more than 2:1. Because of the severity of the topography, it is recognized that the height of the eastern elevation may be greater. The massing of a taller building should be broken with stepped terraces. No continuous elevation should exceed a 4:1 ratio in relation to the western elevation of the building on the opposite side of the street, or to the east/west. In order to achieve this, buildings may have a stepped design. Please refer to Figure 27 for an illustration of this proportional relationship.

These height restrictions do not apply within the Thomas Street Corridor Sub-zone. Height restrictions within the Thomas Street Corridor Sub-zone will be determined by the underlying zoning district.
Figure 27
Proportions of New Construction

X, Y = Street width
NTS
Relative Height: Within a tier, the height of neighboring buildings shall not differ from the existing buildings by more or less that 20%. This restriction shall not apply within the Thomas Street Corridor Sub-zone.

6. **Massing:** New construction may have larger square footage, but should still maintain the horizontal emphasis and linear massing down the slope. Massing should be broken in height, following the terrain. (See Figure 16)

7. **Architectural Detailing:** The architectural detailing of new construction or changes within the Lower Downtown District shall incorporate or reference the architectural detailing of the Key Buildings and the Classic Center. These details include round arches, brick detailing, and the utilization of brick corbeling to articulate the bays of the buildings, segmental arched windows, drip moldings and pedimented cornices. Each of these elements shall be utilized throughout the design of all new buildings and in changes to existing buildings, as appropriate.

8. **Fenestration / Windows:** New Construction and changes must utilize fenestration that has been divided by mullions and muntins in configurations found on the Key Buildings. All windows will be accented by brick, stone or stucco sills, and lintels. In the case of changes or additions to existing buildings, the windows may also have the same design as those found on the building.

(a) **Blank Walls** - the maximum length of a blank exterior building wall along the street front shall not exceed fifteen (15) linear feet. A blank exterior building wall is any wall unbroken to the height of nine (9) feet by either: 1) a doorway; or 2) a window of at least five (5) square feet using design criteria established within these provisions.

(b) **Sides of Buildings** - if the side of a building is readily visible then the provisions regarding the Blank Walls shall apply. If New Construction is occurring in phases, a blank side wall may exist with the following provisions:
(1) The side elevation shall utilize plants, landscape, public art or a combination thereof to reduce the visible effect of the blank wall. Wall murals, categorized as public art, may be painted on the visible wall and may include the logo for the business located within the structure. This provision allows for larger signs, provided that they are classified as a wall mural, than those allowed under the current Athens-Clarke County Sign Ordinance, and is a special provision of this Special District Overlay zone. These provisions do not apply to corner lots, as the justification for the blank wall (i.e., impending construction) does not exist.

9. **Entrances:** Entrances and doorways shall be used to relieve Blank Walls, as described in Section 7. Fenestration / Windows. Loading docks in New Construction or Changes shall be of similar size as those found on the Key Buildings within the Lower Downtown District.

10. **Roofs:** Roofs for New Construction or Changes shall be constructed as a flat roof with parapets or a parapet wall or a front gable roof with a parapet wall, including the sculpted or shaped parapets like those found on Key Buildings within the district. The parapets must be of sufficient height to obscure the view of the gable roof from the street.

The materials of a flat roof may vary, and because the view from the street is obscured, the material may be utilitarian in nature. All Mechanical Systems shall be obscured from sight.

11. **Materials:** The following construction materials are allowed for the exteriors of New Construction or Changes to existing building. They are not for use as primary building material:

- Brick -- with various treatments (painted, etc.)

For architectural details, the following materials are allowed:

- Metal -- particularly window sashes, fencing, cast iron railing, and roofs.
- Stucco -- particularly for accents and foundation
- Concrete-- particularly for foundations, window sill and lintels
Terra Cotta -- for architectural details on buildings within the Thomas Street Sub-zone

The following materials are not allowed for New Construction or Changes:

- Structural Glass and Glass Curtain Walls
- Imitative stucco material (such as Dri-vet)
- Wood -- except for landscaping features

12. **Parking Lots:** Surface parking lots are not encouraged within the district. Street parking shall be limited parking, perpendicular parking or parallel parking, would be encouraged on one side of the street. Parking lots, where they exist, should be constructed so that the visual line of the tier (buildings running linearly north/south in a tier) shall be continued through landscaping, plantings, fencing or other structural means which are appropriate with the district. The depth (east/west) of the parking lot shall not exceed the width of the buildings within that tier. The width (north/south) of the parking lot shall not exceed the width of the street by a ratio of 3:1. (If the parking lot is between two streets with differing widths, the narrower of the two shall be utilized to judge this ratio). Parking decks or other interior parking structures shall be subject to the guidelines for new construction.
13. **Demolitions**

Demolition of Key Buildings shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission may deny a request for the demolition of a Key Building if it finds that the absence of the building would significantly diminish the architectural character of the Lower Downtown District.

The demolition of Discordant Buildings shall be reviewed only on the basis of the proposed development which will replace the building(s) and the demolition shall be approved if the proposed construction meets the Design Guidelines. Demolition to create vacant lots shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission, as vacant lots have a negative impact on the character of the Lower Downtown.
VIII. APPENDIX TWO
CHANGES TO OR MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS

Maintenance: Repair / in-kind repair of the deteriorated portions of the building. Like materials should be replaced with like materials. For instance, the replacement of an asphalt shingle roof with an asphalt shingle roof. Before beginning this work, a review the checklist for the maintenance project is recommended. This category is not limited to work done to buildings. For instance, the re-paving of parking lots is classified as maintenance.

Change: This includes alterations, new construction, additions, demolitions, major site work, expansions, removal of architectural features or details. This Category must receive a more intensive review by the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department. Some types of projects will require review by the Athens-Clarke County Planning Commission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
<th>Change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>In-Kind Replacement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quick Review / No change in materials or appearance</td>
<td>Requires information regarding the materials and process be submitted to the Planning Department</td>
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<td>Foundation</td>
<td>Stabilize, no visible change</td>
<td>Replace deteriorated material with exact match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masonry</td>
<td>Repair damaged area · repointing</td>
<td>Replace deteriorated material with exact match, repainting previously painted brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Change</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>In-Kind Replacement</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Requires information regarding the materials and process be submitted to the Planning Department</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Requires Intensive review by the Planning Department or **Planning Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof Materials</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Replace with exact match</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apply / replace with different material (for instance, replacing an asphalt roof with a metal roof) or in a new configuration (replacing a metal shingle roof with a standing seam metal roof)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof Features</td>
<td>Repair structure</td>
<td>Replace with an exact match</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Alterations to Roof shape or additions to roof, including utilities such as HVAC or satellite dishes. The appearance of the roof tops is of special consideration due to their visibility as a result of the topology of the Lower Downtown Special District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gutters and downspouts</td>
<td>re-attach / repair</td>
<td>Replace with an exact match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Replace with new design or material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doors, entrances</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Replace with an exact match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Change in design, material or size. Closing off the door or creating a new entrance. Replacing a non-historic door with a new design.</td>
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<td>Change</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>In-Kind Replacement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Quick Review / No change in materials or appearance</td>
<td>Requires information regarding the materials and process be submitted to the Planning Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
<td>Repair / reglaze / replace broken glass (in the case of colored or patterned glass, match must be exact)</td>
<td>Replace window surround with exact match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storm Doors</td>
<td>Repair / reglaze</td>
<td>Replace with an exact match (design and material)</td>
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<td>Replace with an exact match (design and material)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cornices, friezes</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Replace with exact match (design and material)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ornamentation (brackets, shutters, trim)</td>
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<td>Replace feature with an exact match</td>
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<td>Paint</td>
<td></td>
<td>Removing paint from a previously painted surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Buildings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Outbuildings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fences (other than temporary silt fencing) and walls (including retaining walls)</td>
<td>Repair&lt;br&gt;Quick Review / No change in materials or appearance</td>
<td>Replace with an exact match&lt;br&gt;Add, change or remove fence or walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Lighting, street furniture, monuments, fountains, etc.,</td>
<td>Repair&lt;br&gt;Quick Review / No change in materials or appearance</td>
<td>Replace with an exact match&lt;br&gt;Add, change or remove fence or walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks, driveways, patios and parking lots</td>
<td>Repair, resurface with exact materials&lt;br&gt;Quick Review / No change in materials or appearance</td>
<td>Replace with exact match&lt;br&gt;Increase in size, change location, change material, change brick or paver pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alterations to the Landscape</td>
<td>Planting</td>
<td>Major re-configuration of landscape - earth moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics, signage, murals</td>
<td>Repair, touch-up&lt;br&gt;Quick Review / No change in materials or appearance</td>
<td>Change graphic information / keeping the sign structure&lt;br&gt;Replace, add, enlarge or remove existing sign or wall mural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demolition</td>
<td></td>
<td>Remove structure or part of a structure&lt;br&gt;** requires review by the Planning Commission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INTERIOR ALTERATIONS**

No review required unless the work affects the exterior appearance of the building
XI. DEFINITIONS

Facade: The exterior face or elevation of a building which is the architectural front, sometimes distinguished from the other faces by elaboration of architectural or ornamental details.

Mechanical Systems: HVAC, elevator equipment, ventilation, solar equipment, antennae or satellite dishes or similar equipment or systems.

Changes to Buildings: This includes alterations, new construction, additions, demolitions, major site work, expansions, removal of architectural features or details.

Maintenance: Repair / in-kind repair of deteriorated portions of the building. Like materials should be replaced with like materials. (See Appendix One: Changes to and Maintenance of Buildings for examples of work considered Maintenance)

Negative Visual Effect: New Construction or a Change to an existing building is considered to have a negative visual effect when it alters or diminishes the architectural characteristics of Lower Downtown as established by the Key Buildings, diminishes the integrity of the property’s design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association. Negative Visual Effects may be direct or indirect.

Discordant Buildings: A building within Lower Downtown that is not a Key Building and detracts from the architectural character of the district. These buildings are identified by the Key Buildings Map.

Key Building: One of the historic buildings located within Lower Downtown that establishes the architectural profile for the district. These buildings are identified as such on Key Buildings Map.