

## **Section 7:13 Commercial Design Standards**

### **7:13.1 Intent**

This section is established to accomplish three goals:

1. To provide protection to residents from poorly designed and aesthetically unattractive commercial developments;
2. To provide the developer with clear standards that their projects must adhere to; and
3. To create design standards without compromising creativity in design for the developer.

To accomplish these goals, this section places regulations on exterior wall design, materials, and colors; roof materials and colors; entrances; pedestrian accessibility; landscaping requirements; and screening of outdoor storage, disposal, HVAC equipment and loading operations.

### **7:13.2 Application**

This section applies to all commercial structures within the following zoning districts:

O-D, Office District;  
C-1, Commercial District;  
C-2, Commercial District;  
C-1N, Neighborhood Commercial District;  
S-1, Service District; and  
P-D, Planned Development District (Pertaining to any commercial uses that could be permitted in the Commercial Zoning Districts).

For the C-1N, Neighborhood Commercial District and PD, Planned Development District, design requirements specified during their respective plan review processes may exceed the standards specified in this section.

### **7:13.3 Design Standards**

The following standards are intended to be used as a design aid by developers proposing retail developments and as an evaluation tool by the Fountain Inn Planning Commission during their review processes.

#### **7:13.4-1 Aesthetic Character**

##### **A: Exterior Walls**

**Intent:** Buildings should have architectural features and patterns that provide visual interest and be consistent with the community's identity, character, and scale. The intent

is to encourage a more human scale that residents of Fountain Inn will be able to identify with their community. The resulting scale will ensure a greater likelihood of reuse of structure by subsequent tenants. The elements in the following standard should be integral parts of the building fabric, not superficially applied trim, graphics, or paint.

**Standard:** Developments with an exterior wall over 100 feet in linear length visible from any private or public right-of-way shall incorporate three different patterned changes at an interval of no more than thirty (30) feet, either horizontally or vertically. Each pattern change must be at least one (1) foot wide. Patterned changes may include the following: color change, texture change, material change, and wall projections or recesses, at least two (2) feet in depth. At least one of the changes must occur horizontally.

**B. Roofs**

**Intent:** Variations in rooflines should be used to add interest to and reduce the scale of buildings. Roof features should compliment the character of adjoining neighborhoods.

**Standard:** Rooflines shall be varied with a change in height every 100 linear feet in the building length. Parapets, mansard roofs, gable roofs, hip roofs, or dormers shall be used to conceal flat roofs and roof top equipment from public view. Alternating lengths and designs may be acceptable and can be addressed in the Development Plan.

**C. Materials**

**Intent:** Exterior building materials comprise a significant part of the visual impact of a building. Therefore, they should be aesthetically pleasing and compatible with materials and colors used in adjoining neighborhoods.

**Standard:** Predominant exterior building materials shall be of high quality materials. These include, without limitation: brick, wood, sandstone, other native stone, and tinted, textured, or split-faced masonry units.

Predominant exterior building materials shall not include the following: smooth-faced concrete block, tilt-up concrete panels, and pre-fabricated steel panels.

**D. Entryways**

**Intent:** Entryway design elements and variations should provide orientation and aesthetically pleasing character to the building. The standards identify desirable entryway design features.

**Standard:** Each building on a site shall have clearly defined, highly visible customer entryways featuring no less than three (3) of the following:

1. canopies or porticos,
2. overhangs,
3. recesses/projections,
4. arcades,
5. raised corniced parapets over the door,
6. peaked roof forms,
7. arches,
8. outdoor patios,
9. display windows,
10. planters,
11. wing walls, and
12. any other architectural detail or feature that accentuates the entryways for the public.

#### **7.13.4-2 Site Design and Relationship to the Surrounding Community**

##### **A. Entrances for Larger Buildings**

**Intent:** Larger commercial buildings should feature multiple entrances. Multiple building entrances reduce walking distances from cars, facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access from public sidewalks, and provide convenience where certain entrances offer access to individual stores, or identified departments in a store. Multiple entrances also mitigate the effect of the unbroken walls and neglected areas that often characterize building facades that face bordering land uses.

**Standard:** Each commercial structure exceeding 25,000 square feet of space shall have two entrances. The two entrances must be located on two different exterior walls that would be most appropriate for access from adjacent parking areas

##### **B. Windows for Smaller Buildings**

**Intent:** Smaller retail stores provide an intimate retail experience. It is not uncommon for small retail stores to construct plain buildings with little or no architectural details to provide a sense of human scale. Windows and window displays of such stores should be used to contribute to the visual interest of exterior facades.

**Standard:** Each commercial structure not exceeding 25,000 square feet shall incorporate windows into their design. Each exterior wall with a customer entrance shall have transparent windows between the height of three feet and eight feet above the walkway grade for no less than 60 percent of the horizontal length of the exterior wall.

Windows shall be recessed and should include visually prominent sills, shutters, or other forms of framing.

**C. Outdoor Storage, Trash Collection, and Loading Areas**

**Intent:** Loading areas and outdoor storage areas exert visual and noise impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. The disturbances created by commercial uses are commonly associated with these specific activities and locations. As such, they should be carefully considered when developed.

**Standards:** Areas for outdoor storage, truck parking, trash collection and compaction, loading, or any other similar activities shall:

1. not be visible from any public or private right-of-way;
2. not be located within 20 feet of any public or private street, sidewalk, or internal pedestrian way, and
3. be screened or incorporated with materials and in a manner consistent with the rest of the site, thereby reducing the presence of them.

These standards are subject to the provisions in Article 7, Section 9.14.

**D. Pedestrian Flows**

**Intent:** Pedestrian accessibility opens auto-oriented developments to the neighborhood, thereby reducing traffic impacts and enabling the development to project a friendlier, more inviting image. This section sets forth standards for public sidewalks and internal pedestrian circulation systems that can provide user-friendly pedestrian access as well as pedestrian safety, shelter, and convenience within the site.

**Standards:** Sidewalks at least five (5) feet in width shall be provided along all sides of the lot that abut a public or private right-of-way. The Fountain Inn Planning Commission may waive this requirement as part of the development plan if it finds that the sidewalks will likely not be used.

Customer entrances to all buildings shall be easily and safely accessible to pedestrians from the public sidewalk through internal sidewalks, pedestrian walkways, or painted crosswalks, no less than five (5) feet in width. At a minimum, walkways shall connect focal points of pedestrian activity such as, but not limited to, transit stops, street crossings, building and store entry points, and shall feature adjoining landscaped areas that include trees, shrubs, benches, flower beds, ground covers, or other such as arcades or entryways are part of the exterior wall.

Pedestrian walkways or sidewalks, no less than five (5) feet in width, shall be provided along the full length of the building along any exterior wall featuring a customer entrance, and along any exterior wall abutting public parking areas. Such pedestrian walkways or sidewalks shall be located at least six (6) feet from the exterior wall of the building to provide planting beds for foundation landscaping except where features, such as arcades or entryways, are part of the exterior wall.

Pedestrian walkways shall be distinguished from driving surfaces through the use of durable, low maintenance surface materials, such as pavers, bricks, or scored concrete, to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort as well as the attractiveness of the walkways.

**E. Central Features and Community Spaces**

**Intent:** Buildings should offer attractive and inviting pedestrian scale features, spaces and amenities. Entrances and parking lots should be configured to be functional and inviting with walkways conveniently tied to logical destinations. Bus stops and drop-off/pick-up points should be considered as integral parts of the configuration. Pedestrian ways should be anchored by special design features such as towers, arcades, porticos, pedestrian light fixtures, bollards, planter walls, and other architectural elements that define circulation ways and outdoor spaces. The features and spaces should enhance the building and the center as integral parts of the community fabric.

**Standards:** Each structure with greater than 25,000 square feet of commercial space shall contribute to the establishment of enhancement of community and public spaces by providing one amenity per 25,000 square feet of commercial space (up to a maximum of two amenities) from the following list:

1. patio/seating area,
2. pedestrian plaza with benches,
3. transportation center,
4. window shopping walkways,
5. outdoor play area,
6. kiosk area,
7. water feature,
8. clock tower,
9. steeple, or
10. other deliberately shaped area, focal feature, or amenity that, in the judgment of the Fountain Inn Planning Commission adequately enhances such community and public spaces.

Each amenity shall have direct access to the public sidewalk network and such features shall not be constructed of materials that are inferior to the materials of the building and landscaping.

Although the City of Fountain Inn does not currently maintain a public bus system, all sites with more than 50,000 square feet of commercial space shall provide or be designed to accommodate possible (future) bus service and the growing number of private bus services (i.e., nursing home/assisted living, etc.).

**7:13.5 Curb Cuts**

**Intent:** To have safe and efficient traffic flow accessing roadways. Better access management will help increase sight visibility and reduce traffic accidents.

**Standards:** Street, driveway, or other access separation along state and federal highways shall be in accordance with the SCDOT, “Access and Roadside Management Standards.”

TABLE INSET:

**Table 1. Maximum Number of Driveways Per Frontage**

Length of Frontage (feet)	Maximum Number of Driveways
200 or less	1*
200+ to 600	2
600+ to 1,000	3
1,000+ to 1,500	4
More than 1,500	4 plus 1 per each additional full increment of 500 feet of frontage

\* On frontages of 200 feet or less, a pair of one-way driveways may be substituted only if the internal circulation on the site is compatible with the one-way driveways and wrong-way movements on the driveways are rendered impossible or extremely difficult for motorists.

**Table 2. Recommended Minimum Spacing for Driveways.**

Operating Speed (mph)	Recommended Minimum Spacing from Center to Center (feet)
30 or less	100
35	150
40	200
45	250
50	300
55 and above	350

When possible, new development should design vehicular access in a way that encourages the use of shared driveway access to a public roadway. This can be accomplished with double or one-way entrances. Driveways may also provide linkage between lots. Linkage will connect adjoining lots thus providing traffic movement from one development to another.

**7:13.6 Lighting**

**Intent:** To increase aesthetic values and safety for the development and application of effective, energy efficient lighting practices that minimize night sky glow, glare, and light pollution.

**7:13.6-1 General Standards for Outdoor Lighting**

The maximum light level permissible at a residential property line shall not exceed one-half (0.5) foot-candles where non-residential uses abut residential uses, and shall not exceed two (2.0) foot-candles at the road right-of-way or at a non-residential property line.

**7:13.6-2 Flood Lighting**

All flood lights shall be installed with the fixture aimed downward at least forty-five (45) degrees below horizontal. Flood lights shall be orientated or shielded so that the source of the light is not visible from the road right-of-way or from any residential use.

**7:13.6-3 Wall Packs, Ground Mounted Lighting, and Sign Lighting**

All wall packs shall be cutoff type fixtures. All external lighting fixtures on a sign or ground mounted luminaries lighting building facades, steeples, trees, billboards, monument signs, flags, and other like items shall not exceed 175 watts. Such lighting fixtures shall be oriented or shielded so that the source of the light is not visible from the road right-of-way or from any residential use. The light output from an internally illuminated sign shall not exceed the limits of Section 7:13.6-1 herein.

**7:13.6-4 Parking Lots and Outdoor Merchandise Display Areas**

All parking lot and merchandise display area lighting fixtures, other than floodlights permitted under 7:13.6-2 herein, shall be cutoff fixtures and shall be mounted at a height not greater than thirty-two (32) feet above finished grade. Lighting levels in a parking lot shall not exceed twenty (20) foot-candles, and merchandise display area lighting shall not exceed thirty (30) foot-candles, initial level.

**7:13.6-5 Vehicular Canopy Lighting**

Lighting fixtures under a vehicular canopy shall be cutoff fixtures or fixtures fully recessed into the canopy. Lighting levels under the canopy shall not exceed thirty (30) foot-candles, and the source of the light shall not be visible from the road right-of-way or from any residential property.

**7:13.6-6 Outdoor Playing Field or Performance Area Lighting**

All outdoor playing field or performance area lighting fixtures shall be equipped with louvers, shields, or other devices to control glare and to direct lighting at the playing field or performance area. Lighting fixtures shall be mounted at a height not greater than eighty (80) feet above the playing field or performance area. Lighting of the playing field or performance area shall be extinguished no later than one (1) hour after the event.

**7:13.6-7 Permits**

A Lighting Plan shall be included with all building permit applications for new construction. Such plan shall include specifications of the lighting fixtures to be used, a detailed Site Plan which shows the location of all existing and proposed improvements, the location of the lighting fixtures, and a point-by-point foot-candle array. The Zoning Administrator may waive any or all of the above permit requirements, and accept a certification by a qualified design professional that the Lighting Plan complies with all of the requirements contained herein. These same plan requirements shall apply when new lighting fixtures are being erected on an existing developed property.

**7.13.7 Administration**

**Intent:** To insure compliance with this ordinance, plans must follow the appropriate criteria of the ordinance and must be submitted in such a manner as to provide a sufficient amount of time for review.

**Standards:** The developer or property owner must submit a Development Plan to The Zoning Administrator. The Development Plan shall include the following:

1. A boundary survey with vicinity map, title block, scale, and north arrow, identification of the total number of acres of overall site, location and size of each structure; and
2. As many written explanations, diagrams, and/or examples as necessary to demonstrate compliance with all sections of this ordinance.

The Fountain Inn Planning Commission shall review and take action on the submitted Development Plan within forty-five (45) days after receipt of the plan by Fountain Inn Public Works Department.

This review and action shall take place during the Fountain Inn Planning Commission’s regular meeting. At that time, the Fountain Inn Planning Commission may consider input from the Zoning Administrator and Greenville County Planning Commission staff. When reviewing a Development Plan, the Fountain Inn Planning Commission may waive any part of Section 7:13, Commercial Design Standards, if they find that compliance with the section is impractical or impossible.

Upon approval from the Fountain Inn Planning Commission, the developer or property owner must not deviate from the plans. If circumstances prevent the compliance with the approved plan, the developer may submit a revised Development Plan to the Fountain Inn Planning Commission for reevaluation.

If the submitted Development Plan is not approved, the applicant may submit a new Development Plan to be reviewed during the next regular meeting of the Fountain Inn Planning Commission. If the new Development Plan is not approved, a review fee of \$75.00 will apply for any subsequent submittals.

All commercial establishments subject to this ordinance must adhere to the Development Plan as approved by the Fountain Inn Planning Commission.

Any failure to adhere to the Development Plan as approved by the Fountain Inn Planning Commission or violation of this ordinance shall be a misdemeanor. The Zoning Administrator has a duty to enforce compliance with this ordinance.

The City of Fountain Inn may apply to the Court of Common Pleas for an injunction directing a developer or property owner to cease any violation of this ordinance.

All construction of improvements shown or described in the Development Plan shall comply with all applicable codes and ordinances of the City of Fountain Inn.

Any interested party shall have the right to appeal any decision of the Fountain Inn Planning Commission to the Court of Common Pleas by filing a Notice of Appeal with the Clerk of Court for Greenville County within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the written decision of the Fountain Inn Planning Commission.

If the determination by the Court of Common Pleas is that the decision is supported by substantial evidence and is in accord with applicable law, then the appeal shall be dismissed. If the Court of Common Pleas determines that the decision is not supported by substantial evidence or is not in accord with applicable law, the decision shall be reversed and relief shall be granted as may be appropriate.

Any written decisions of the Fountain Inn Planning Commission shall be considered a final determination unless the written decision is appealed pursuant to this ordinance.

**DONE IN REGULAR MEETING THIS 14th DAY OF July, 2005.**

First Reading: 06-09-05

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Gary H. Long, Mayor

Final Reading: 07-14-05

ATTEST:

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Sandra H. Woods, City Clerk

Approved as to Form: \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Goodson, City Attorney