GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
Historic preservation has played a major part in the economic revitalization of many of Tennessee's older downtowns including Collierville. Appropriately rehabilitated facades located within the downtown historic district create a natural setting for commercial activities. Customers and visitors expect an attractive and well-maintained central business district. Each building improvement helps generate the next project.

These guidelines reflect the pragmatic approach that historic downtowns continue to evolve and adapt with each new generation. Physical changes to historic assets are managed in a careful way but no attempt is made to stop change. Over time the framework of historic preservation and economic development can work together to keep downtown viable and help it to continue to play its important role as the historic heart of the community.

The guidelines for certain types of institutional buildings such as schools, libraries, and churches may very from commercial building guidelines. These buildings, due to their function and community symbolism, usually are of a distinctive design. Their scale is often more monumental and massing and orientation relate to the particular use within the building. For this reason, the design of any new such institutional building in the district should follow the guidelines listed on page 91.

Commercial site design issues are not covered individually in a separate section. Rather, they can be referenced in different chapters throughout these guidelines. Issues such as setback, spacing and the commercial street edge are covered under the section titled Facade Analysis, starting on page 65. Issues such as parking, curbs, sidewalks lighting and appurtenances in the commercial district are covered under Chapter IV: Guidelines for Streetscape/Public Improvements.

Accessibility issues for commercial building are covered under the Rehabilitation section of this chapter on page 80.

Collierville has a variety of original and retrofitted storefronts

These historic structures have highly decorative brick corbelling, cornices and copings.
A. REHABILITATION

1. FACADE ANALYSIS

Several commercial buildings in downtown Collierville contain ground floor retail businesses that require display windows and upper-story space for housing, storage, or offices. As a result, the primary elevations—or facades—of historic commercial buildings have a predictable appearance. Generally, commercial buildings average two to four stories and nearly all have flat or shed roofs. Collierville also has a number of one-story commercial buildings. No matter how many stories, traditional commercial buildings have three distinct parts that give the facade an overall unified appearance: storefront, upper floor(s) and cornice.

The design character of the downtown area is defined by the street wall created by the buildings.

The design character of the downtown area is defined by the cornice area and parapet wall at the top of the building.
Although Collierville’s downtown has few two-story buildings, the patterns of windows create a rhythm of openings along the street wall.

The design character of the downtown area is defined by storefronts, windows and entrances that create the transparent openings at the street level.
**Cornice**
The cornice decorates the top of the building and may be made of metal, masonry, or wood. Some decorative cornices project from the building while an ornamental band delineates others. The top of the wall may have a patterned brick band or may have a coping of brick, concrete, or metal.

**Upper Floor**
Upper floors are characterized by smaller window openings that repeat on each floor. These windows may vary in size, type, and decoration but usually are the same for each floor. Other facade details may be present on the upper level facades such as brick banding, corbelling, metal grilles or decorative panels.

**Storefront**
The first-floor storefront is transparent and is framed by vertical structural piers and a horizontal supporting beam, leaving a void where the storefront elements fit. The storefront elements consist of an entrance (often recessed), display windows, a bulkhead under the display windows, transom windows over the storefront, and a cornice which covers the horizontal beam. The first floor also may contain an entrance to the upper floors. Later buildings may lack several elements of traditional storefronts such as transom windows, or decorative details.
2. Commercial Architectural Forms

Collierville's downtown buildings have a variety of architectural styles and forms, but most reflect early twentieth-century vernacular architecture.

These commercial buildings along Mulberry Street have a nice variety of heights and parapet styles.

These commercial buildings along North Main Street have similar architectural forms but differentiate in their architectural detailing.
3. Planning a Facade Improvement

Over time commercial buildings are altered or remodeled to reflect current fashions or to eliminate maintenance problems. Often these improvements are misguided and result in a disjointed and unappealing appearance. Other improvements that use good materials and sensitive design may be as attractive as the original building and these changes should be preserved. The following guidelines will help to determine what is worth saving and what should be rebuilt.

a. Conduct pictorial research to determine the design of the original building or early changes.

b. Conduct exploratory demolition to determine what remains and its condition. (This work would require approval from the HDC.)

c. Remove any inappropriate materials, signs, or canopies covering the facade.

d. Retain all elements, materials, and features that are original to the building, or are sensitive remodelings, and repair as necessary.

e. Restore as many original elements as possible, particularly the materials, windows, decorative details, and cornice.

f. When designing new elements, conform to the configuration and materials of traditional storefront design. Reconstruct missing original elements (such as cornices, windows, and storefronts) if documentation is available, or design new elements that respect the character, materials, and design of the building.

g. Avoid using materials that are incompatible with the building or district, including aluminum-frame windows and doors, aluminum panels or display framing, enameled panels, textured wood siding, unpainted wood, artificial siding, and wood shingles. False historical appearances such as “Colonial,” “Olde English,” or other theme designs should not be used.

h. Avoid using inappropriate elements such as mansard roofs, metal awnings, coach lanterns, small-paned windows, plastic shutters, inoperable shutters, or shutters on windows where they never previously existed.

i. Maintain paint on wood surfaces and use appropriate paint placement to enhance the inherent design of the building. See page 78 for further information about painting.
4. Storefront Rehabilitation Options

Q: What happens when the building has an oversized pent roof?

A: Remove the pent roof and restore any missing elements. Add an awning to cover the transom window.

Q: What happens when the original transom is missing but the cornice is still intact?

A: Restore the transom and/or add an awning. OR... Make the transom a signboard.
Q: What happens when the building has been covered with artificial siding?

A: Remove the artificial siding and restore the original brick.

Q: What happens when the historic storefront was replaced with an inappropriate storefront?

A: Remove the inappropriate storefront and rebuild the original storefront based on historical documentation. Or install a new storefront that respects the historic character of the district.
5. Openings: Windows and Storefronts

Traditionally-designed commercial buildings found in Collierville have distinctive rows of upper story windows and storefronts on the first level. The windows typically have vertical proportions and may have a decorative lintel or cap over them. Their light (pane) configuration varies with the style and age of the building. The upper floor windows are very important as they provide light and ventilation to the interior of the upper floors. They can also help define the character of the building and can provide a pattern of openings with neighboring buildings for the street wall of the entire block.

a. Retain the original windows and keep painted surfaces well-painted.
b. If the panes have been painted over, remove paint from the glass.
c. Remove any coverings from upper story windows and restore to original appearance.
d. Reuse as many of the original parts of the window as possible. Replace missing or damaged frames, sash, muntins and glass with materials that match the original. Reuse serviceable hardware and locks.
e. Do not change the architectural appearance of windows by using inappropriate materials or finishes which radically change the sash, depth of reveal, and muntin configuration or the appearance of the frame.
f. Do not change the number, location, size or glazing pattern of windows by cutting new openings, blocking in windows, or installing a replacement sash that does not fit the window opening.

PRESERVATION BRIEF

NOTE: Consult Preservation Briefs #9, 13, 33 for information on historic window preservation and repair.
/Publications available at http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm.)

PRESERVATION BRIEF

NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #11 for information on historic storefronts.
/Publication available at http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm.)
The size and proportion of the windows are not compatible with the surrounding buildings.

Upper story windows typically have a double-hung sash.

This retrofit display window is more residential in design and is not appropriate for a historic commercial building.

Transom windows should be maintained on historic commercial buildings.
6. Cornices, Parapets and Eaves

Cornices and parapets add architectural interest to an old building. On many commercial buildings, cornices and parapet brickwork are highly visible elements. Cornices and parapets may be difficult to maintain because they are located high up on the building and cover a large expanse. However, these two elements are very important to maintain, as water penetration through a rotted or damaged element could severely damage a building wall or roof.

a. Inspect your cornice and parapet for loose or missing pieces, signs of water damage, overall sagging and separation of the cornice from the building. Look for cracks or deflecting bricks in the parapet wall. This may indicate the cornice is leaning or loose, creating an unsound structural condition.

b. Any structural problems, such as a failing parapet wall or a loose cornice, need to be stabilized and repaired or replaced. This is dangerous work and should be done only by a professional.

c. If the building is missing its original cornice, look for historic evidence before replacing it with a new one. A new cornice should be architecturally compatible with the building and the surrounding area.

d. New cornices and eaves should be properly flashed and sloped to ensure against water entry. Proper ventilation is also important to protect against moisture buildup.

e. For information on painting cornices and eaves, refer to the Paint section on page 78.
7. ROOFS

The roof is not a prominent element in many of the commercial buildings found in the historic district since most are hidden from public view. Common roof materials in the historic district include metal, composition shingles or built-up roofs with tar and gravel.

a. When trouble with roofing occurs, contact a professional, such as an architect or roofing contractor, who is familiar with the characteristics of the roofing system involved.
b. The original roof pitch and configuration of the roof should be maintained.
c. The original roof color and materials should be retained. If replacement is necessary, match the material as closely as possible. Evaluate roof replacement projects in the light of the prominence and visibility of the roof.
d. Retain elements, such as chimneys, skylights and light wells, that contribute to the style and character of the building.
e. Maintain critical flashing around joints and ensure proper functioning of the gutter system.
f. Ventilate any attic space to prevent condensation.
g. Do not add new elements, such as vents, skylights or additional stories, that would be visible on the primary elevations of the building.
8. Secondary Elevations

Secondary elevations on commercial buildings are often forgotten and neglected. Side elevations on corner buildings can be just as important to the public view as the front one. The area behind a building may be a utilitarian space for deliveries and storage of discarded goods. However, in some cases the rear of the building may provide the opportunity for a secondary entrance, particularly if oriented to a public alley. The appearance of the back area then becomes important to the commercial district and to the individual business. Customers may be provided with direct access from any parking area behind the building. In these cases, the back entrance becomes a secondary entrance to the store and is the first contact the customer makes with the business. Care should be taken to maintain secondary elevations as properly as primary ones.

a. Keep rear entrances uncluttered and free from unsightly items such as trash or recycling materials not in containers.

b. Leave enough space in front of the rear entry for pedestrians to comfortably enter the building and meet all handicapped requirements.

c. Consolidate and screen mechanical and utility equipment in one location as much as possible.

d. Consider adding planters or a small planting area to enhance and highlight the rear entrance and create an adequate maintenance schedule for them.

e. Retain any historic door or select a new door that maintains the character of the building and creates an inviting entrance. Note building and ADA codes when and if changing dimensions or design of entrance.

f. Maintain the original windows and window openings when possible. Windows define the character and scale of the original facade and should not be altered.
g. Repair existing windows when possible and avoid replacement. If they are replaced, ensure that the design of the new window matches the historic window and has true divided lights instead of the clip-in muntin bar type.

h. If installation of storm windows is necessary, see windows section on page 72 regarding proper procedures.

i. Remove any blocked-in windows and restore windows and frames if missing.

j. If security bars need to be installed over windows, choose a type appropriate for the window size, building style and required level of security. Avoid using chain link fencing for a security cover over windows.

k. If the rear window openings need to be covered on the interior for merchandise display or other business requirements, consider building an interior screen and maintain the character of the original window's appearance from the exterior.

l. Install adequate lighting for customer and store security. Ensure that the design of the lighting relates to the historic character of the building.

m. Consider installing signs and awnings that are appropriate for the scale and style of building.

n. Install adequate security including alarm systems and hardware for doors and windows. Design and select systems and hardware to minimize impact on historic fabric of building.

o. Ensure that any fire escapes meet safety regulations and that no site elements inhibit proper egress.

p. Ensure that any rear porches are well maintained; and if used as upper floor entrance(s), are well lit and meet building codes while retaining their historic character.

9. Artificial Siding

Artificial sidings are not appropriate for traditional commercial buildings. In addition to changing the original appearance of the building, artificial sidings may make maintenance more difficult because they may cover up potential moisture problems that can become more serious.

a. Remove artificial siding and restore original building material, if possible. Most commercial buildings in the historic district are brick masonry. See Chapter I: Owning Property in the Historic District, page 21 for restoration and cleaning of masonry tips.

PRESERVATION BRIEF

NOTE: Consult Preservation Briefs #8, 16 for information on substitute materials on historic buildings. (Publications available at http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm.)
10. PAINT AND COLOR

A properly painted building accentuates its character-defining details. Painting is one of the least expensive ways to maintain historic fabric and make a building an attractive addition to a historic district. Many times, however, buildings are painted inappropriate colors or colors are placed incorrectly.

Some paint schemes use too many colors but more typical is a monochromatic approach in which one color is used for the entire building. On particularly significant historic buildings there is the possibility of conducting paint research to determine the original color and then recreating that appearance.

a. Remove loose and peeling paint down to the next sound layer, using the gentlest means possible: hand scraping and hand sanding (wood and masonry) and wire brushes (metal). A heat gun or plate or special sander can be used on wood for heavy build-up of paint. Take precautions when removing older paint layers since they may contain lead.

b. Do not use sandblasting, open flames, or high-pressure water wash to remove paint from masonry, soft metal, or wood. Take precautions when removing older paint layers since they may contain lead.

c. The painting of brick is inappropriate unless it is mismatched or so deteriorated that it cannot withstand weather. If painting is necessary, an original natural color should be used. It is appropriate to re-paint a brick building only if it has been previously painted. Painting of stone is inappropriate.

d. Choose colors that blend with and complement the overall color schemes on the street. Do not use bright and obtrusive colors. The numbers of colors should be limited. The Collierville Historic District Commission does not review and regulate paint colors on wood. Follow the tips on the next page to ensure an appropriate paint scheme for your commercial building.
Painting Tips

- Ensure that all surfaces are free of dirt, grease, and grime before painting.
- Prime surfaces if bare wood is exposed or if changing types of paints, such as from oil-based to latex.
- Do not apply latex paint directly over oil-based paint, as it will not bond properly.
- Use a high-quality paint and follow manufacturer's specifications for preparation and application.
- Avoid painting masonry that is unpainted.

On typical commercial buildings, two different colors are used to define walls and trim. A third complementary accent color can be used in awnings or on signs.
11. Accessibility

Access ramps and lifts are a necessity for many older historic buildings which were not built with at-grade entrances. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all commercial entities, which are places of public accommodation, be accessible to disabled users, or provide alternative accommodations. Access ramps and lifts can usually be added to historic buildings without substantially altering their historical significance if designed carefully and sensitively.

Preservation Brief #32 recommends that whenever possible, access to historic buildings should be through a primary public entrance. If this cannot be achieved without permanent damage to character-defining features, at least one entrance used by the public should be made accessible. If the accessible entrance is not the primary public entrance, directional signs should direct visitors to the accessible entrance. A rear or service entrance should be avoided as the only means of entering a building.

Designs for ramped access are controlled by the building code and can involve issues such as design for emergency exiting (or egress) and general safety. Applicants are encouraged to consult with an architect and the Collierville Building Code Official to determine how best to design safe ramps which will provide wheelchair access.

Ramps can be screened by low walls or landscaping. They can also be hidden by picket or wrought iron fencing. Railings may also be simple wrought iron to minimize their appearance.

Elevators and chairlifts are alternate ways of providing access in accordance with the ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Elevator additions are considered building additions and require full consideration of the guidelines for new construction. Chairlifts should be hidden with landscaping or a low screen wall or fence.

Integration of ramps and stairs allows access for everyone.
B. NEW CONSTRUCTION

The following guidelines include general recommendations for the design of new commercial buildings in Collierville's Historic District. The intent of these guidelines is not to be overly specific or to dictate certain designs to owners and designers. The intent is also not to encourage copying or mimicking particular historic styles, although some property owners may desire a new building designed in a form that respects the existing historic styles of the district.

These guidelines are intended to provide a general design framework for new construction. Good designers can take these clues and have the freedom to design appropriate, new commercial architecture for Collierville's Historic District. These criteria are all important when considering whether proposed new buildings are appropriate and compatible, however, the degree of importance of each criterion varies within each area as conditions vary. For instance, setback, scale and height may be more important than roof forms since the sloping roofs of most buildings are not visible in the downtown area.

There is limited opportunity to build new structures in the downtown area since most of the land is already occupied by existing historic buildings. For this reason, buildings that contribute to the historic character of Collierville's Historic District generally should not be demolished for new construction.
Most commercial buildings in Collierville's Historic District have a very limited setback and spacing.

1. SETBACK AND SPACING

Setback is the distance between the building wall and the property line or right-of-way at the front of the lot. Spacing refers to the distances between buildings.

   a. Setback and spacing for new construction in downtown should relate to the majority of surrounding historic commercial buildings.
The massing and footprint of a new structure (shaded box) may appear too large for this block unless its facade is divided into several bays.

2. Massing and Building Footprint

Mass is the overall bulk of a building and footprint is the land area it covers. In Collierville’s downtown, most buildings have a small square or horizontal mass and are sited on lots with a width of 20 to 60 feet. The nature of the mass will be further defined by other criteria in this chapter such as height, width and directional expression.

a. New construction in downtown should relate in footprint and mass to the majority of surrounding historic dwellings.
The majority of commercial structures in the district are horizontal or square in their expression although there are also some vertical ones.

3. Complexity of Form

A building's form, or shape, can be simple (a box) or complex (a combination of many boxes or projections and indentations.) The level of complexity usually relates directly to the style or type of building.

   a. In general, use simple rectangular forms for new construction that relate to the majority of surrounding commercial buildings.

The majority of commercial structures in the district are horizontal or square in their expression although there are also some vertical ones.

4. Directional Expression

This guideline addresses the relationship of height and width of the front elevation of a building mass. A building is horizontal, vertical, or square in its proportions.

   a. In new construction, respect the directional expression (or overall relationship of height to width) of surrounding historic buildings.
5. Height and Width

The actual size of a new building can either contribute to or be in conflict with a historic area. While zoning allows up to 35 feet in height in the Central Business District, commercial buildings in the historic district for the most part are only one story.

a. New construction proportions should respect the average height and width of the majority of existing neighboring commercial buildings in the district.
6. Scale and Orientation

Height and width also create scale, or the relationship between the size of a building and the size of a person. Scale also can be defined as the relationship of the size of a building to neighboring buildings and of a building to its site. The design features of a building can reinforce a human scale or can create a monumental scale. In Collierville, there is a variety of scale. For instance, an institutional building like a church or library may have monumental scale due to its steeple or entry portico while a more human scale may be created by a storefront in a neighboring commercial building. Orientation refers to the direction in which the front of a building faces.

a. Provide features on new construction that reinforce scale and character of the surrounding area, whether human or monumental, by including elements such as storefronts, vertical and horizontal divisions, upper stories windows and decorative features.

b. New commercial construction should orient its facade in the same direction as adjacent historic buildings, that is, to the street.

c. Front elevations oriented to side streets or to the interior of lots should be discouraged.
The design of new buildings should reflect the large area of openings that Collierville's traditional commercial structures contain, particularly at the first level.

7. Openings: Storefronts, Doors and Windows

Commercial buildings in Collierville have a variety of storefronts and some upper story windows. A number of storefronts have been reconfigured, but not all of are appropriate for a historic district. When looking to build a new infill commercial building, follow the guidelines below for appropriate design. Also refer to the rehabilitation section of this chapter for information on correct storefront proportion and design.

a. The rhythm, patterns, and ratio of solids (walls) and voids (windows and doors) of new buildings should relate to and be compatible with adjacent facades. The majority of existing commercial buildings in Collierville’s Historic District have a higher proportion of openings to wall area. This factor suggests that new buildings should also share that general proportion of openings to wall, particularly in regard to the storefront on the first level.

b. The size and proportion, or the ratio of width to height of window openings of new buildings’ primary facades, should be similar and compatible with those on facades of surrounding historic buildings.

c. Window types should be compatible with those found in the district, which are typically some form of double-hung sash.

d. Traditionally designed openings generally have a recessed jamb on masonry buildings and have a surface mounted frame on frame buildings. New construction should follow these methods in the historic district as opposed to designing openings that are flush with the rest of the wall.

e. Many storefronts of Collierville’s historic buildings have typical elements such as transoms, cornices, bulkheads, and sign areas. Consideration should be given to incorporating such elements in the design of storefronts on new buildings.

f. If small-paned windows are used in a new construction project, they should have true divided lights and not use clip-in fake muntin bars. Most major window manufacturers make a wide variety of windows that still have true divided lights.
Materials’ palette within Collierville’s Historic District.

8. MATERIALS AND TEXTURE

Almost all of the buildings in Collierville’s downtown commercial area are brick masonry, and a few have wood siding.

a. The selection of materials and textures for a new commercial building should be compatible with and complement neighboring historic buildings.

b. In order to strengthen the traditional image of the commercial area of the historic district, brick is the most appropriate material for new buildings.

c. Synthetic sidings, such as vinyl, aluminum and synthetic stucco (EIFS products), are not historic cladding materials in the historic district and their use is not recommended.
9. Paint and Color

The selection and use of colors for a new commercial building should be coordinated and compatible with adjacent buildings. For further information, see the general painting guidelines and illustration on page 78 and 79.

10. Decorative Elements

The details and decoration of Collierville’s commercial historic buildings vary tremendously with the different styles, periods, and types. Such details include cornices, roof overhang, lintels, sills, brackets, masonry patterns, shutters, entrance decoration, and storefront elements. The important factor to recognize is that many of the older commercial buildings in the district have decoration and noticeable details.

It is a challenge to create new designs that use historic details successfully. One extreme is to simply copy the complete design of a historic building and the other is to “paste on” historic details on a modern unadorned design. Neither solution is appropriate for designing architecture that relates to its historic context and yet still reads as a contemporary building. More successful new buildings may take their clues from historic images and reintroduce and reinterpret designs of traditional decorative elements.

The illustrations and photographs found throughout this book offer many examples of details from the historic district and may serve as a source for new designs.
11. **New Commercial Buildings on Industrial Sites**

New commercial construction in Collierville’s Historic District may occur on redevelopment of industrial sites. Redeveloping these sites encourages more building density in the historic district and allows an opportunity for a diversified commercial market. These new commercial buildings are another opportunity to create designs that respect the historic character in the surrounding areas. The following guidelines relate specifically to building being developed on former industrial sites.

New construction must follow the zoning regulations for height and setback. See the zoning map on page 13 to determine the zoning for new construction.

**a. Site Guidelines**

1. Setback and spacing for new construction in downtown should relate to the majority of surrounding historic commercial buildings.
2. Encourage a pedestrian connection to neighboring and existing commercial buildings.

**b. Building Placement and Form**

1. New construction should relate in footprint and mass to the majority of surrounding historic dwellings.
2. In general, use simple rectangular forms that relate to the majority of surrounding commercial buildings.
3. Massive commercial buildings are inappropriate in the historic district. New construction proportions should respect the average height and width of the majority of existing neighboring commercial buildings in the district.
4. Respect the directional expression (or overall relationship of height to width) of surrounding historic buildings.
5. If there are no surrounding commercial buildings, the new building should relate to existing commercial building forms in the historic district.
6. New commercial construction should orient its facade in the same direction as adjacent historic buildings, that is, to the street.
7. Front elevations oriented to side streets or to the interior of lots should be discouraged.
8. Office or commercial parks should be designed using the same guidelines as for individual buildings. This includes issues such as street frontages, siting, signage, building materials and parking.

**c. Building Materials and Details**

1. Building materials should be compatible with existing commercial buildings in the historic district. Industrial materials, such as corrugated siding, are not appropriate for commercial buildings.
2. Provide features on new construction that reinforce scale and character of the surrounding area, whether human or monumental, by including elements such as storefronts, vertical and horizontal divisions, upper stories windows and decorative features.
d. Parking

1. Some new commercial buildings in the historic district allow for one row of parking in front of the building. This should be the maximum amount of parking allowed in front of a new commercial building.

2. New parking should be located to the sides and rears of buildings and should be screened with landscaping if the area is prominently visible from a public right-of-way.

3. New parking and sidewalks should be paved with appropriate materials. Use of exposed aggregate, brick or concrete pavers and gravel are encouraged.

e. Accessibility

Follow all ADA regulations and guidelines; see page 80 for more information.

12. Civic and Institutional Buildings

The symbolism and function of town halls, courthouses, libraries, schools, churches and other civic and institutional buildings usually result in distinctive designs. These structures are the visual landmarks scattered throughout the community. They usually have a larger surrounding site and their architectural design reflects their importance in the life of the community.

1. Recognize that the scale of these buildings may not visually relate to nearby buildings within the historic district.

2. Design such buildings so that their materials and forms attempt to relate to surrounding structures if possible.
C. ADDITIONS

There are limited opportunities to make additions to many of Collierville’s commercial buildings. An exterior addition to a historic building may radically alter its appearance. Before an addition is planned, every effort should be made to accommodate the new use within the interior of the existing building. When an addition is necessary, it should be designed and constructed in a manner that will complement and not detract from the character defining features of the historic building.

These guidelines for additions apply to schools, churches, and other institutional buildings as well as commercial buildings in Collierville’s Historic District.

The design of new additions should follow the guidelines for new construction on all elevations that are prominently visible (as described elsewhere in this section.) There are several other considerations that are specific to new additions in the historic district listed below.

1. FUNCTION

Attempt to accommodate needed functions within the existing commercial structure without building an addition.

2. DESIGN

New additions should not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

3. REPLICAATION OF STYLE

A new addition should not be an exact copy of the design of the existing historic building. If the new addition appears to be a part of the existing building, the integrity of the original historic design is compromised and the viewer is confused over what is historic and what is new. The design of new additions can be compatible with and respectful of existing commercial buildings without being a mimicry of their original design.
4. MATERIALS AND FEATURES
Use materials, windows, doors, architectural detailing, roofs, and colors which are compatible with the existing commercial historic building.

5. ATTACHMENT TO EXISTING BUILDING
Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to existing commercial buildings and structures shall be done in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building or structure would be unimpaired. Therefore, the new design should not use the same wall plane, roof line or cornice line of the existing structure.

6. SIZE
Limit the size of the addition so that it does not visually overpower the existing commercial building.

7. LOCATION
Attempt to locate the addition on the rear elevations or in a manner that makes them visually secondary to the primary elevation of the commercial structure. If the addition is located on a primary elevation facing the street or if a rear or side addition faces a street, parking area, or an important pedestrian route, the visible elevation of the addition should be treated under the new construction guidelines.

D. CONVERSION OF RESIDENCES TO COMMERCIAL USE
Several historic residences along Main and Center streets have been converted to commercial uses over the years. Conversion of residential buildings to commercial uses places new demands on these historic dwellings. These buildings require special care and consideration if their historic features are to be retained. The following are guidelines for preserving and rehabilitating residential buildings which are in a commercial use.

IN GENERAL

1. Preserve the Residential Character of Residential Properties: Within the commercial areas of the Historic District, preserve and rehabilitate historic residential buildings. Conversion of residential property to commercial uses in this area should not alter the residential appearance and character of the historic building. Additions and alterations should follow residential guidelines (See Chapter II).

2. Preserve the Residential Setting: Residential properties should retain their original landscape setting, as viewed from the street or public right-of-way.

3. Preserve Residential Features: Residential features, such as front entrances, porches or porte cocheres, should be retained and preserved where residential buildings are converted to commercial uses.
GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

1. Driveways, Parking and Walks

Conversion of residential buildings to a commercial use often requires additional parking and sidewalks for clients or customers.

   a. New parking should be located to the sides and rears of existing buildings and should be screened with landscaping if the area is prominently visible from a public right-of-way.

   b. New parking and sidewalks should be paved with appropriate materials. The zoning ordinance requires parking lots to be paved.

Follow the guidelines listed under Chapter II: Residential Guidelines, Driveways, Parking and Walks on page 36.

The Collierville Chamber of Commerce has relocated into a house and has maintained most of its residential features.

New parking should be located to the sides and rears of converted dwellings.
2. **Accessibility**

The same ADA rules and regulations that apply to commercial buildings also apply to residential buildings converted to a commercial use. Follow the ADA guidelines listed in this Chapter, page 80.

3. **Signs**

   a. For residential buildings converted to commercial uses, flat signs attached to the wall at the first floor or suspended from the fascia between porch columns are appropriate. Signs attached to the structure should not cover any architectural detail.

   b. For residential buildings small projecting signs attached to the wall at the first floor or porch column are appropriate and should not be located higher than the top of the porch.

   c. Freestanding signs should be no higher than six (6) feet.

   d. Lighting of signs should be provided only by direct external lighting, such as flood lights or spot lights. External lighting sources should be shaded, shielded or directed so that the light intensity will not be objectionable to surrounding areas.

4. **Paint and Color**

The Collierville Historic District Commission does not review and regulate paint colors on wood. Follow the color recommendations of particular architectural styles listed in Chapter II: Guidelines for Residential Buildings, Paint and Color, on page 46.
E. SIGNS

Signs are a vital part of the downtown scene. A balance should be struck between the need to call attention to individual businesses and the need for a positive image of the entire district. Signs can complement or detract from the character of a building depending on their design, placement, quantity, size, shape, materials, color and condition. Historically significant signs should be retained if possible on buildings, even if the business is no longer in existence.

Signs shall comply with Collierville’s sign ordinance except where stated otherwise.

The following guidelines apply to commercial and business uses in the Historic District. For complete information about Collierville’s Sign Regulations, see the Collierville Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 12. Additional sign guidelines for businesses located within a Residential Zone District under the H-1 Historic Zoning District are found in the appendix and in “Conversion of Residences to Commercial Use,” Section 3, “Signs” on the previous page.
1. **TYPES AND LOCATIONS**
   a. Place signs so that they do not obstruct architectural elements and details (including vents) that define the design of the building. Respect signs of adjacent businesses.
   b. Flat wall signs for commercial buildings can be located above the storefront, within the frieze of the cornice, on covered transoms, or on the pier that frames display windows or generally on flat, unadorned surfaces of the facade or in areas clearly suitable as sign locations.
   c. Projecting signs for commercial buildings should be at least 10 feet above the sidewalk and project no more than 3 feet from the surface of the building. They should not be placed above the cornice line of the first floor level unless they have a clearance of less than 10 feet. Wall signs shall not be higher than the roof line of the building or 18 feet, whichever is lower.
   d. Window signs (interior and exterior) should be approximately 5.5 feet above the sidewalk at the center point for good pedestrian visibility. Optional locations could include 18 inches from the top or bottom of the display window glass.
   e. Window signs are also appropriate on the glazing of doors and on upper floor windows for separate building tenants.
   f. Awning and canopy signs should be placed on the valance area only. The minimum space between the edge of the letter and the top and bottom of the valance should be 1.5 inches.
   g. Hanging signs are designed for installation under an awning, canopy, porch overhand, or marquee. Hanging signs may be perpendicular or parallel to a building. The bottom of
a hanging signs that is perpendicular to the building and hangs under an awning, canopy, or marquee shall be no less than seven (7) feet above the sidewalk.

2. NUMBER
   a. Each ground floor occupant of a business structure is permitted two business signs facing each street upon which his business fronts.
   b. The number of signs used should be limited to encourage compatibility with the building and discourage visual clutter.
   c. Of the two signs for a business, each should be a different type.
   d. A building should have only one wall sign per street frontage. Buildings on corner lots are allowed signs on both frontages.
   e. Businesses on the upper floors of a building are permitted one wall sign adjacent to the entrance.
   f. If customer access is provided at the rear of the building, property owners should consider reserving some of the building mounted sign allocation for identification of the business at that entry.

3. SIZE
   a. The area of business signs upon a structure should not exceed one and one half (1 1/2) square feet of sign for every foot of front frontage of the building. The maximum square footage sign allotment should not exceed 150 square feet, except as approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals.
   b. Flat wall signs should not extend more than 6 inches from the surface of the building.
   c. Projecting signs should be a maximum of 6 square feet per face.
   d. Hanging signs that are perpendicular to the building and hangs under an awning, canopy, or marquee shall be no less than seven (7) feet above the sidewalk.

The location and size of signs should be carefully planned and coordinated. A rectangular sign may work better than a square sign in some of the above examples.

The size of signs should be proportional to the size of the building. Smaller buildings should use smaller signs, so not to detract from any architectural features of the building.
to a building shall be no larger than 4 square feet. The size of a hanging signs that is parallel to the building shall be calculated according to the maximum signage allotment, but in no case shall exceed 10 square feet.

e. Window signs should obscure no more than 15 percent of the window glass.

f. In general, signs should be proportional to the building they are placed on. A sign that meets the Sign Ordinance requirements may not be appropriate given the scale of the building and the character established by the adjacent storefronts.

4. MATERIALS

Use traditional sign materials such as wood, glass, gold leaf, raised individual metal or painted wood letters, and painted letters on wood, metal, or glass. Avoid the use of foam molded letters. Some plastic individual letters may be appropriate if they have a non-glossy finish and do not appear as having a shiny plastic appearance. Some engineered wood products (e.g. high-density fiberboard, or medium-density fiberboard) may also be appropriate in certain applications, but only when painted. Wall signs should not be painted directly on the surface of historic masonry walls if the wall has not been previously painted. Window signs should be painted or have decal flat letters and should not be three-dimensional.

The size of signs should be proportional to the size of the building. This sign is a good example as it is large enough for a passerby to read, but doesn’t overwhelm the building.

While individual letters may be a traditional form of signs, these letters are oversized and inappropriate for the building. Individual sign letters on masonry walls may also cause damage, such as holes and spalling, to the masonry.
IN GENERAL

Execution
Sign professionals who are skilled at lettering and surface preparation should execute signs.

Design
It is important that signs be readable while conveying an image appropriate for the business or the building in a historic setting. Often sign painters or graphic designers can assist with sign design.

Shape
Shape of signs for commercial buildings should conform to the area where the sign is to be located unless a sign is to take on the shape of the product or service provided, such as a shoe for a shoe store. Such shapes should not obscure architectural elements of the building.

5. COLOR
Use colors that complement the materials and color scheme of the building, including accent and trim colors. Three colors are recommended, although more colors can be appropriate in exceptional and tastefully executed designs.

6. LIGHTING
Illuminated signs shall adhere to the following provisions and restrictions in addition to those stated in the sign ordinance.

a. The light for or from any illuminated sign shall be so shaded, shielded or directed that intensity will not be objectionable to surrounding areas.

b. No sign shall have blinking, flashing or fluttering lights or other illuminating device which has a changing light intensity, brightness or color.

c. No colored lights shall be used at any location in any manner so as to be confused with or construed as traffic control devices.

d. Neither the direct nor reflected light from primary light sources shall create a traffic hazard to operators of motor vehicles on public thoroughfares.

e. Exposed bulbs shall not be used on the exterior surface of any sign.

f. Neon signs shall not be permitted.

g. Canopies and awnings shall not have back-lighting.

The large historic sign on this warehouse is appropriate only for this industrial building function.
Generally, canopies or awnings cover the whole transom window.

A variety of fabric awnings and valances can be hung from awning frames or metal canopies.

Collierville has a variety of metal and wood canopies on its downtown buildings.

F. AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

Awnings can contribute to the overall image of downtown by providing visual continuity for an entire block, helping to highlight specific buildings, and covering any unattractively remodeled transom areas above storefronts. They also protect pedestrians from the weather, shield window displays from sunlight and conserve energy. Few buildings in the historic district have awnings; many of the storefronts around the Town Square have mansard or pent roofs. These elements should be removed if possible. Awnings should be added as a part of the new design.
1. TYPES

a. Standard Sloped Fabric Awnings: Whether fixed or retractable, sloped awnings are the traditional awning type and are appropriate for most historic buildings, both residential and commercial.

b. Boxed or Curved Fabric Awnings: A more current design treatment, this type of awning may be used on non-historic or new commercial buildings.

c. Canopies and Marquees: Appropriate on some commercial buildings, canopies and marquees must fit the storefront design and not obscure important elements such as transoms or decorative glass.

d. Aluminum or Plastic Awnings: These awnings are inappropriate for any buildings within the historic district.
2. Design and Placement

a. Place awnings carefully within the storefront, porch, door, or window openings so they do not obscure elements and do not damage materials.

b. Choose designs that do not interfere with existing signs or distinctive architectural features of the building or with street trees or other elements along the street.

c. Choose an awning shape that fits the opening in which it is installed.

d. Make sure the bottom of the awning valance is at least seven (7) feet high.

e. Avoid using metal or plastic awnings.

f. Backlit awnings or canopies are prohibited within the historic district.

3. Fabric and Color

a. Coordinate colors with the overall building color scheme. Solid colors, wide stripes, and narrow stripes may be appropriate, but not overly bright or complex patterns.

b. Avoid using shiny plastic-like fabrics.

4. Signs

a. As appropriate, use the front panel or valance of an awning for a sign. Letters can be sewn, screened, applied or painted on the awning fabric; avoid hand-painted or individually made fabric letters that are not professionally applied.

b. See the sign section for size and placement requirements for awning signs.

Canopies cover the sidewalk on this row of commercial buildings on North Main Street.

Metal canopies need to be properly maintained to make sure they don’t rust.

Proper maintenance of wood or metal canopies lengthens their life-span.