

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

A Practical Guide to designing buildings that
Inspire, Connect, and Stand the Test of Time.



WHAT TO EXPECT

“ Guidelines are the invisible hand that turn ideas into inspiring, lasting spaces.”

RESIDENTIAL

- Timeless Styles
- Form & Composition
- Parts and Pieces
- Doors & Windows
- Materials & Colors
- Garage Design

COMMERCIAL

- Timeless Styles
- Materials
- Colors
- Details
- Roof & Parapet
- Doors and Windows
- Outdoor Equipment
- Lighting
- Canopies & Awnings

INDUSTRIAL

- Site
- Style and Form
- Doors & Windows
- Materials & Colors

WELCOME!

We are here to help

This is a tool to provide design direction for meet expectations of creating community cohesion to maintain design continuity throughout the project build cycle and for many years after completion. This is a creative jumping-off point that results in timeless community design that can be appreciated for generations and thrive.

“We shape our buildings, and they shape us.”
- Winston Churchill

intent

- Promote high-quality design to enhance community image, support livability, and help attract/retain quality employers.
- Assist in retaining the unique qualities that make Brandon special by applying consistent design principles to help differentiate Brandon from surrounding areas and foster a unique sense of place.
- Assist with implementing and interpreting the Zoning Code by illustrating and interpreting design standards within the Town's zoning regulations.
- Retain flexibility for property owners to ensure that they can maintain and expand their businesses or buildings using creative design solutions.



RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Residential architecture should be designed with both the present and the future in mind. Quality design should not only meet individual needs but should also meet the needs of the community as a whole.



Why Traditional styles?

Strengthens Cultural Identity

Preserves culture,, creating pride and unity through designs that reflect the community's character.

Builds a Sense of Belonging

Familiar, human-scale architecture evokes comfort, security, and nostalgia, making residents feel at home.

Encourages Social Interaction

Porches and courtyards promote neighborly connections, while walkable layouts enhance community engagement.

Creates Harmony

Ensures visual consistency, fostering balance and avoiding chaotic contrasts in design.

Boosts the Local Economy

Supports artisans, uses local materials, and attracts tourism, creating jobs and stimulating regional economic activity.

Sustains Long-Term Growth

Timeless, durable designs maintain property value, support mixed-use spaces, and adapt to demographic changes.

Improves Quality of Life

Climate-responsive and aesthetically pleasing designs enhance comfort, mental well-being, and community pride.

Attracts New Residents

A unique architectural identity and livable neighborhoods draw families, professionals, and retirees.

Simply Feels Like Home

The warmth, elegance, and charm of traditional Southern architecture create a comfortable and inviting atmosphere that modern styles often struggle to replicate.

Exceptional living in a small town atmosphere

How does this help developers and builders?

Reintroducing a mixture of traditional housing types offers more unique products. These styles can make the development more appealing and desired. Traditional Styles offer developers a way to differentiate themselves in the housing market through community-focused designs.



RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

TIMELESS STYLES

intent

When does a house become a home?

Rather than repeating the same nontraditional-style home designs, reintroduce local traditional styles that will offer unique opportunities for buyers and developers alike and are not subject to the whims of design trends.

Whether you're building a new home or restoring an older one, leaning into these traditions can give your space that perfect mix of warmth, style, and practicality.

What's your vision?

Understanding Traditional Southern Architecture

Historic Influences

Southern traditional residential architecture isn't just about building a house—it's about creating a home that feels welcoming, comfortable, and connected to its environment. These designs combine beauty, function, and a sense of community. Here's what makes them special:

- **Front Porches:** These wide, shaded spaces are perfect for sipping sweet tea, chatting with neighbors, or just relaxing on a breezy afternoon. They also keep the sun at bay and help your home stay cool.
- **Large Windows:** Large Windows promote airflow and to help cool interiors during hot summers, while large maximizing natural ventilation and light.
- **Classic Symmetry and Balance** Many Southern homes are balanced and symmetrical, with perfectly placed doors and windows. This gives them that timeless, elegant look that never goes out of style.
- **Historical Charm:** Styles like Greek Revival, Colonial, Craftsman, and Shotgun houses are staples of the South. Each one tells a story of the region's history and culture, making every home feel like it has its own personality.

Regardless of specific style influences, our community's homes should share common threads:

Emphasis on Hospitality: The front porch acts as a transitional space from public to private life, signaling a warm welcome.

Climate Adaptation: Elevated foundations, wide overhangs, breezy layouts, and shading elements address the region's humidity, heat, and occasional severe storms.

Elegant Simplicity: Facades often showcase balanced proportions, crisp trim, and thoughtfully applied ornamentation rather than excessive decoration.

Why Should You Embrace Southern Traditional Design Today?

- **Timeless Beauty** Let's face it—Southern homes just *look good*. Their classic styles have stood the test of time, and they add instant curb appeal and value to any neighborhood.
- **Designed for the Climate** Southern architecture is a natural fit for hot, humid areas. Features like big windows, shady porches, and light-colored exteriors help keep your home cool and comfortable.
- **Community-Friendly** The design of Southern homes encourages connection. Porches bring neighbors together, and the welcoming aesthetic makes your house a place where everyone feels at home.
- **Customizable for Today's Needs** Love the charm of Southern design but need modern conveniences? No problem! These styles are super flexible and can blend old-world charm with all the comforts of modern living.



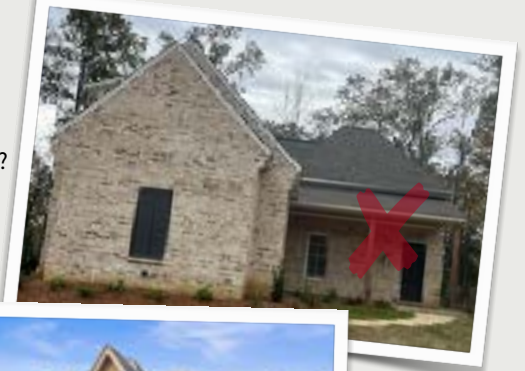


It's time to reduce the monotony and return to the traditional styles that have stood the test of time. Those traditional designs are more unique and appealing, attracting potential buyers looking for more than just a house —

They're looking for a Home



- Only one window?
- Entry door has no significant location.



- No identifiable style.
- This "design" is over used and saturated the market.
- No inviting porch or front door
- Lack of trim details, visual interest, charm and warmth.



- Porch Columns are unequally spaced
- Roof is missing Top-Heavy.
- Garage mass dominates the facade.
- This porch's depth is too shallow (main 8'-10').



RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

FORM & COMPOSITION

intent

Balance timeless elegant shape with practical application.

Functional designs are ultimately about aligning physical structures with user behavior, environmental considerations, and the space's purpose. This combination of form and composition ensures Southern homes are practical for the climate, visually appealing, and rooted in a sense of tradition and community.

Back to the Basics

Basic Forms in Southern Architecture

- **Rectangular or Square Shapes:** Simple, symmetrical layouts provide a timeless and practical base.
- **Pitched Roofs:** Steep roofs, often with gables or dormers, help with rain runoff and add character.
- **Porches:** Large front or wraparound porches are a defining feature, offering shade, ventilation, and a welcoming vibe.
- **Raised Foundations:** Homes are slightly elevated to protect against flooding and improve ventilation.

How All the Elements Work Together

Composition is about how the parts of the home—its walls, roof, windows, and doors—are arranged to create harmony and balance. Here's how Southern homes achieve that:

- **Symmetry** Balanced arrangements of windows, doors, and other elements create harmony.
- **Front Entry Focus** Centered doors with decorative features like columns, transoms, or sidelights draw the eye and invite visitors.
- **Proportions** Windows are tall and narrow, and porches are wide but well-scaled to the home's size.
- **Ornamentation** Shutters, railings, and moldings add charm without overwhelming the clean lines.



How does Form & Composition create a "Sense of Place"

The way these elements come together isn't just about beauty—it's also about creating a home that feels rooted in its surroundings. For example:

- Large porches provide shelter from rain and sun, encouraging outdoor living.
- Symmetry and proportion reflect order and tradition, aligning with the cultural values of hospitality and timelessness.
- The raised foundation and steep roofs are practical solutions to the Southern climate, showing how these homes are designed to work with nature.





Why does it Matter ?

When you understand the basics of form and composition, you can:

- Recognize what makes a Southern home “feel right.”
- Create designs that honor tradition while meeting modern needs.
- Ensure your home has both functionality and charm, making it a joy to live in.
- Would you like help visualizing or designing a Southern-inspired home? We can explore forms, layouts, and details together to match your vision!



- Roof and plan needs to be simplified.
- Multiple gables and valleys add cost, but add no beauty.
- Entry is dominated by house massing
- Garage is most prominent feature.
- Nothing Timeless about these designs



- “Gable Ends” are awkwardly proportioned.
- House massing and Garage are not cohesive.
- Parch is not deep enough
- Entry isn’t the prominent feature.



- Dormer is midsized & window is too small.
- Garage is the most prominent feature.
- Parch is not large enough.
- Entry isn’t the prominent feature.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

PARTS & PIECES

intent

Embrace stylistic and highly functional components.

Traditional Southern architectural components are both aesthetic and practical, designed to provide comfort in the region's hot, humid climate while fostering a sense of community and cultural heritage. Incorporating these elements into modern designs can preserve the timeless appeal of Southern architecture while meeting contemporary needs.

Beauty is in the Details

Large Front Porches

- Provides shade and cooling during hot summers.
- Encourages community interaction and neighborly engagement.
- Acts as a transitional space between indoor and outdoor living.
- Depth and Width: A spacious porch (often 8 to 10 feet deep) can accommodate comfortable seating, swings, or even dining sets.
- Wide,, deep front porches, and wrapping around the house.

Shutters

- Use Functional or decorative window shutters
- Adds visual interest and a charming aesthetic.

Gabled and Hipped Roofs

- Adds character and complements the overall architectural style.
- Directs rain away from the structure, critical in regions with frequent storms.

Columns and Railings

- Conveys a sense of grandeur and tradition.
- Offers structural support for wide porches while enhancing aesthetic appeal.
- Adds character and curb appeal

Raised Foundations

- Protects structures from flooding in low-lying areas.
- Encourages airflow beneath the house, keeping interiors cooler.

Wide Eaves and Overhangs

- Protects walls and windows from direct sunlight and rain.
- Helps maintain comfortable indoor temperatures.

Screened Porches

- Provides a comfortable outdoor living space free from mosquitoes and bugs.
- Reflects the Southern tradition of enjoying nature while staying cool.

Decorative Trim

- Adds craftsmanship and personality to each structure.
- Enhances the ornate and historic character of homes.
- Intricate wooden trims, brackets, and moldings adorn porches, eaves, and doors.

Dormers and Chimneys

- Include dormers for light and ventilation, and chimneys for vertical balance, ensuring they align with the overall symmetry.

Light Fixtures & Ceiling Fans

- Use historic style fixtures to add detail and interest to the facade and create a warm glow on the face of the house at night.





Details are like seasoning in Southern cooking—too little, and it's bland; too much, and you've got a hot mess. Get it just right, and you've got a **Masterpiece!**



Not all porches are created equal!



- Porch is too narrow to be functional.
- Lacks any interesting trim detailing.
- This IS NOT a traditional southern style.
- Wood post lack visual interest.
- Brick should not be used to "highlight" window edge.



- Not enough trim detail.
- Using Siding material alone isn't enough, to make it interesting. Traditional, and thoughtful detailing and trim work should be implemented.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

DOORS & WINDOWS

intent

Framing views, shaping light, defining charm

It not just about seeing out, its also about The aesthetic principles can transform doors and windows into artful, statement-making features that embody the timeless elegance

Eyes to the soul of a Home

Doors

Proportion and Scale:

- Doors should be proportional to the façade and the architectural style.
- Taller entry doors (7-8 feet) are common and align with higher ceilings.

Decorative Elements:

- Use transom and sidelight windows to frame the door, enhancing natural light and ventilation.
- Incorporate decorative moldings or pediments for visual interest.

Windows

Symmetry:

- Paced symmetrically across the façade for balance.
- Match window styles on each story to maintain a cohesive look.

Size and Placement:

- Large, tall, double-hung windows allow for better ventilation and natural light.
- Paired or group in rows, especially on porches.

Shutters:

- Use operable or decorative shutters, proportional to the window size.
- Shutters should match the window height and use hardware reflecting traditional functionality.

Trim and Details:

- Incorporate detailed molding or cornices around windows to add depth and elegance.
- Use light-colored frames to reflect Southern architectural traditions.
- Multi-pane designs, such as 6-over-6 or 9-over-9 patterns, are quintessential Southern styles.

Doors welcome, windows charm.
Together, they turn a house into a
home with a story to tell.

Dormers

Proportion:

- Dormers should be scaled appropriately to the roof and house size to avoid overpowering the design.
- Align dormers symmetrically with windows or doors below for harmony.
- Avoid crowding dormers; maintain spacing to balance rooflines.

Roof Style:

- Match the dormer roof pitch to the main roof for visual consistency.

Windows:

- Small, vertically-oriented windows (matching the style of the main windows) work best.
- Multi-pane windows in dormers echo the larger windows below.

Materials:

- Use the same roofing material and exterior finish as the main structure for cohesion.





- The gable windows are too small, style, and location. It looks very awkward on the side of the gable.



- Only one window on the entire front elevation.



- The front door is treated like a other window. Not very inviting or welcoming .
- Dormer is too small and disproportional.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

MATERIALS & COLORS

intent

Don't be loud, be interesting

Material and color selections are the foundation of a building's identity, combining practicality with beauty. They tie the structure to its location, highlight its style, and ensure it remains appealing and functional over time.

Set the Tone

Pick your materials

- Fiber Cement Siding
- Metal Roofing
- Stucco: Best for Mediterranean or Spanish-style Southern homes, with proper sealing to resist moisture.
- Brick: Red or earthy tones, known for their resilience and classic look.
- No Vinyl products

Add Contrast Shutters & Doors

These details bring balance and focus to the façade. Specifics:

- Shutters: Go for black, Charleston green, or navy blue for traditional elegance.
- Front Door: Use bold hues like red, hunter green, or deep blue for a striking focal point.

Use Textured Materials

Textures add dimension and character to the design.

Specifics:

- Board-and-Batten Siding: Ideal for farmhouse and cottage styles.
- Exposed Beams: Use on porches or ceilings for a rustic touch.
- Brick Detailing: Add texture around windows, doors, and corners.

Choose your color

Neutral tones are timeless, reflect heat, and create a calming aesthetic.

- Exteriors: Soft white, cream, beige, or light gray.
- Accents: Pair with light green, pale blue, or soft yellow for shutters and trim.





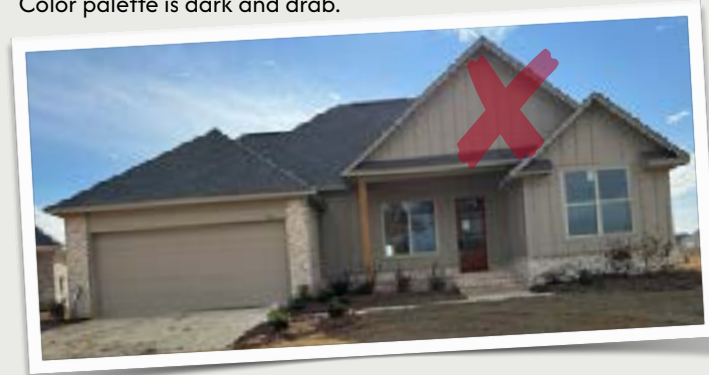
The right colors and materials can make a southern home feel timeless, inviting, and practical.



- Stick with one brick color thought and don't smear brick.
- Debt use bricks as accents for window and door surrounds.



- Avoid brown and speckled brick colors. They age quickly with trends.
- Color palette is dark and drab.



- Using contrast on trim to avoid color palette looking "muddy".

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

GARAGE DESIGN

intent

The home should represent us, not a vehicle.

A garage can be more than just a functional necessity—it can enhance the overall design if thoughtfully integrated. It should blend in, not stand out.

Incorporating a garage is about balance. By considering its placement, design details, and how it interacts with the landscape, you can make the garage feel like a natural extension of the home. Whether detached, side-facing, or front-facing, it's all about blending practicality with timeless charm.

Park with Purpose

Best Placement

- **Detached Garage:** Keeps the facade clean and can connect via a breezeway for charm and functionality.
- **Side or Rear-Facing Garage:** Hides the garage from view, maintaining curb appeal.
- **Front-Facing Garage:** If necessary, set it back from the facade and use architectural elements to blend it in.



A garage should be like a good Southern host—welcoming, well-dressed, and never stealing the spotlight from the front porch!

Multi-Functional & Practical Design

- **Living Space Above:** Create a guest suite or office to enhance functionality.
- **Carport Addition:** A side-facing garage with a covered space doubles as an outdoor gathering area.
- **Driveway & Landscaping:** Use curved brick pavers and greenery to soften the structure's presence.





Entry as the Focal Point

- Maintain the porch's prominence by keeping the garage roofline lower and enhancing porch details.
- The front porch should remain the centerpiece of the design.
- Ensure the garage doesn't overshadow the porch.
- Ensuring the roofline of the garage is scaled lower than the home's main structure.
- Enhancing the porch with details like railings, columns, and lighting to draw attention.

Architectural Features

- Match siding, brick, and trim for a seamless look.
- Carriage-Style Doors: Adds classic Southern charm with paneling and hardware.
- Roof & Windows: Match the home's roof pitch and add dormers or shutters to integrate the design.



- Garage is closest to the street and dominates the facade.
- Door needs to be divided into two different smaller doors .



- Needs to be divided into 3 different smaller doors .
- Added hardware and trim to door for detail and interest.



- It has door hardware and detailing, but is too prominent and overpowers the entry door..

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Commercial design guidelines are more than just aesthetics—they shape a city's identity, economic vitality, and long-term success. A well-designed city isn't just a place to visit; it's a place to stay, invest, and thrive.



Building a Thriving City

Creating a Cohesive Identity

Well-planned commercial areas enhance a city's character, ensuring a visually appealing and unified streetscape that attracts businesses and visitors alike.

Driving Economic Growth

Attractive, walkable business districts boost foot traffic, support local businesses, and increase property values, making the city a prime destination for investment.

Enhancing Functionality & Accessibility

Smart design promotes pedestrian-friendly streets, well-placed signage, and accessibility, ensuring a welcoming environment for all.

Supporting Long-Term Sustainability

Guidelines encourage energy-efficient buildings, green spaces, and thoughtful layouts, ensuring the city remains resilient and adaptable for future generations.

Maintaining Order & Quality

Without guidelines, commercial areas can become cluttered and inconsistent. Clear standards prevent haphazard development and create a well-balanced urban landscape.

The physical image of commercial buildings should invigorate the local economy

How does this help developers?

Guidelines don't limit creativity—they streamline success. They provide a clear roadmap, ensuring that developers create high-quality, profitable, and well-integrated spaces that stand the test of time.



COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

TIMELESS STYLES

intent

Why Traditional Design Still Matters

Modern commercial buildings can sometimes feel cold and generic. Traditional exterior design brings warmth, character, and lasting appeal. Classic storefronts and well-planned facades not only enhance curb appeal but also make spaces more inviting and functional for businesses and customers alike.

Built to Last

Strong Massing & Proportion

- **Balanced Shape & Scale:** The building should feel proportional to its surroundings—neither too bulky nor too flat.
- **Clear Visual Hierarchy:** Ground floors are taller and more transparent to engage customers, while upper floors are more subdued.
- **Rooflines & Facades with Depth:** Avoid plain boxes—use cornices, overhangs, and layered materials for interest.
- **Timeless Aesthetic:** Avoid trendy gimmicks—classic, well-proportioned designs age well.

Why is this important?

A well-designed building isn't just about looking good—it **attracts customers, boosts business,** and adds character to a community!



Engaging & Functional Facades

- **Articulated Facades:** Avoid large blank walls with no detail.
- **Defined Entrances:** A well-marked, welcoming entry is crucial—use recessed doors, archways, or awnings for emphasis.
- **Consistent Materials & Colors:** Brick, stone, or wood create a cohesive look while staying durable and timeless.



Corporate Prototypes

Corporate prototypical building designs should be avoided. A higher design effort is encouraged for the Business Brand materials, colors, and massing.



Walkability & Street Presence

- **Wide, Safe Sidewalks:** Provide enough space for pedestrians, seating, and landscaping.
- **Awnings & Canopies:** Offer shade and protection, making the space more inviting.
- **Outdoor Interaction:** Patios, display areas, and seating help activate the streetscape.



360 ° ARCHITECTURE

Building elevations other than the street-facing elevation should have similar but less detailed architectural treatments. Design, materials, and detailing should be consistent with the architectural design and/or themed style of the primary/front façade.

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

MATERIALS

intent

Complement the context rather than attract attention.

The best commercial exteriors use neutral base colors, rich accents, and high-quality, durable materials. Whether you want a classic, modern, or industrial look, sticking to a balanced color palette and thoughtful material choices ensures a commercial space that looks welcoming, professional, and built to last.

Best Materials

Pick your materials

- Keep material pallet simple. (No more than 3 materials)
- **Primary Material** - Main body of the building.
- **Secondary Materials** - Trim, Cornice, Shutters, Doors.

Brick & Stone (Classic & Durable)

- Red Brick is the preferred primary building material using traditional brick details.
- Red Brick and natural stone provide longevity and timeless appeal.



Architectural Metal Panels

- Metal is not a preferred material. However, it may fit characteristics for certain businesses and locations.
- When allowed, panels should be detailed with adequate thickness to resist dents and impacts and should have trim elements to protect edges. Only concealed fastener Architectural Profile panels will be considered. No type R-panels are allowed.



Wood & Fiber Cement

- Use smooth face texture
- Thinner Units insure more rigidity.
- Incorporate intention detail for added interest.
- Careful attention should be paid to corners and joints.
- Mimic historic wood details when possible.



Cast-in-place/ Precast Concrete

- Appropriate if sufficient articulation and detail are provided to diminish the appearance of a large, blank wall and provide a high-quality architectural finish.

Concrete Masonry Units

- Smooth Face/ Limestone Finish is acceptable as an accent.
- Split-face CMU may **NOT** be used.



Stucco (Smooth & Flexible)

- Use a smooth limestone finish, with appropriate and adequate joints and details.
- Should be used as a secondary or accent material.



- Do not use brick as nontraditional details.



- Too many materials are used. Lacks cohesion in design.
- Stucco Parapet has no detail and too large.



- Brick "arches" are not proportional.

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

COLORS

intent

Don't be loud, be interesting and warm.

Applying color to a commercial building isn't just about choosing nice shades—it's about balance, proportion, and strategic placement. A well-thought-out color scheme enhances architectural features, strengthens brand identity, and creates a welcoming presence

Colors shouldn't speak louder than words

Neutral, Natural & Timeless Shades

- White, beige, gray, taupe, and soft earth tones create a classic and professional look.
- Use neutral Earth tones as the primary base color.
- Deep browns, brick reds, dark greens, and navy blues add warmth and sophistication.

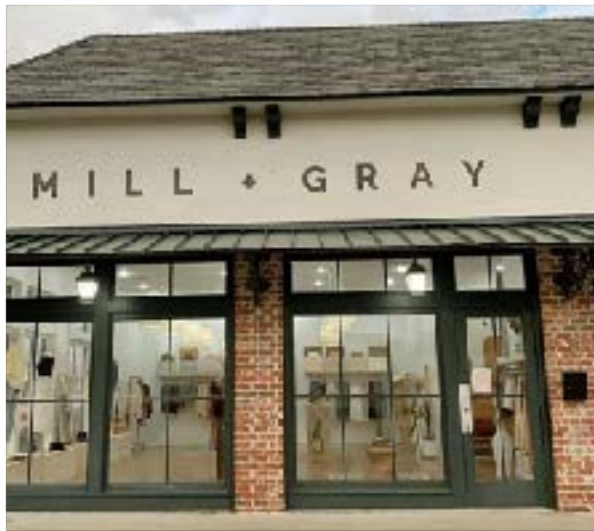


Use a Balanced Color Scheme

(60-30-10 Rule)

- **60% Primary Color** – The main body of the building should be a neutral or muted tone that ages well.
- **30% Secondary Color** – Used for trim, window frames, and architectural details to add depth and contrast.
- **10% Accent Color** – Applied to doors, awnings, signage, or other focal points to create interest.

Tip: Accent colors should enhance a building's features without overwhelming the design.



Ensure Visual Harmony

- Blend with the Environment
- Colors should align with the area's character.
- Consider Nearby Buildings
- Tip: Avoid extremes—buildings should stand out for the right reasons, not because they look out of place.

Tip: What looks trendy today may feel outdated in a few years—stick with timeless choices for long-term appeal.



- Do not strip the building using color or materials.



- Keep colors neutral and blend together.
- Separate with tones, not contrasting colors.
- Avoid Loud, Neon & Overly Trendy Colors
- Avoid "yellows" that fade over time.

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

DETAILS

intent

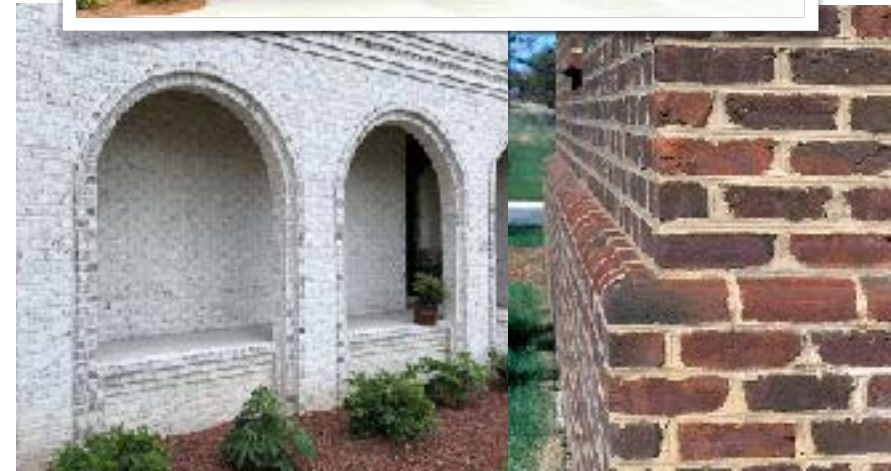
The difference between forgettable and unforgettable

Proper detailing of building materials enhances durability, aesthetics, and functionality. Well-executed details highlight craftsmanship, create visual interest, and ensure longevity in commercial and retail architecture

Details make the Difference

Brick & Masonry Detailing

- **Cornices & String Courses** – Decorative bands or projections add depth and shadow.
- **Patterned Brickwork** – Herringbone, Flemish bond, or recessed panels create texture.
- **Arched or Soldier Course Headers** – Accentuate windows and doors.
- **Quoins & Pilasters** – Strengthen edges and corners while adding classic elegance.
- **Water Tables & Base Courses** – Protect lower walls from moisture while adding visual grounding.



Wood & Trim Detailing

- **Layered Molding & Cornices** – Enhances rooflines, window frames, and doors.
- **Decorative Brackets & Corbels** – Supports awnings or overhangs while adding elegance.
- **Shiplap, Board-and-Batten, or Clapboard Siding** – Creates varied textures for a refined look.
- **Paneled or Carved Woodwork** – Adds depth to doors, wainscoting, and storefront.



Whether using brick, wood, metal, stone, or glass, thoughtful detailing makes a structure feel crafted, welcoming, and timeless. Smart material detailing helps commercial and retail buildings stand out while blending seamlessly into their surroundings

Stone, Concrete & Stucco Detailing

- **Rusticated Base or Foundation** – Creates a solid, grounded feel.
- **Engraved or Inset Panels** – Add branding or artistic flourishes.
- **Fluted or Textured Finishes** – Break up large surfaces and create movement.
- **Projected Bands or Ledges** – Casts shadows and provides



Metal & Steel Detailing

- **Decorative Grilles & Screens** – Enhance façades while providing ventilation or shading.
- **Ornamental Railings & Balconies** – Add classic or industrial character.
- **Exposed Structural Elements** – Braces, rivets, and beams create a bold, modern aesthetic.



- Not enough detail or thought to soft and facia. Looks cheap and lazy
- No Vinyl!!



- No interesting detailing on the EFIS parapet or columns.



- Don't "Over Detail" facades. Find the balance.
- Details should be subtle and complimentary (tradition).

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

ROOF & PARAPET

intent

Raising the Roof: Designing with Style and Purpose

A well-designed roof and parapet enhances aesthetics, adds depth, and ensures a professional, finished look. Follow these design rules of thumb to create a balanced, visually appealing, and functional commercial building.

Designs that Top them all

Maintain Proper Proportion & Scale

- Parapets should be proportional to the building height —too short looks weak, too tall feels overwhelming.
- Roof overhangs & cornices should be deep enough to cast shadows for depth and visual interest.
- Break up long flat facades with varied parapet heights or stepped rooflines for dimension.
- Break up flat parapets and add elegance with cornices, moldings, or recesses.
- Brick facades with parapets should extend the brick to the top and use historic brick parapet detailing.

Tip: Parapet height should be at least 2-5% of the building's total height for balance.



Material and Colors

- For hipped roofs, use standing Seam Metal, or architectural asphalt shingles,
- Visible metal roofs should be a darker color so not to be too reflective to public view.
- Contrast materials (brick, stucco, metal accents) can subtly highlight the roofline..
- Visible backside of parapets should match color of front color to appear cohesive.



Ensure Functionality & Concealment

- Hide all roof top equipment with a parapet at least 1-2 feet taller than rooftop units.
- While not preferred, when using Mechanical Screens, the screen design should appear intentional and integral to the architecture.
- Downspouts should be concealed within walls whenever possible.
- Proper drainage is essential—flat roofs should have slight slopes or drainage systems to prevent pooling.
- Use durable materials for parapets to resist weather damage and staining over time.



A good roof isn't just overhead
—it's the crown that gives a
building its character

Integrate Signage & Branding Gracefully

- Signage should be scaled properly to avoid overpowering the parapet.
- Consider backlit or dimensional signage instead of flat-painted signs for a professional look.
- Keep branding consistent with the building's design, ensuring it enhances rather than disrupts aesthetics.

Tip: Signage should occupy no more than 25-30% of the parapet space to maintain balance.



Too many inconstant and competing parapet styles.



Arched parapet detail doesn't compliment the overall architectural style and are out of place.



Brick Pilasters should not extend beyond the overall parapet plane. Proper balance and symmetry would require the columns to support a brick entablature with historic detailing.

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

DOORS & WINDOWS

intent

Doors invite, windows engage— design them well

Doors and windows are essential design elements that influence how people perceive, experience, and interact with a commercial space. By prioritizing visibility, proportion, and functionality, businesses and communities enhance their appeal, professionalism, and long-term success.

The Eyes and Handshake of Your Building

Proportion, Balance & Scale Matter

- Windows should align with the building's height and width.
- Taller buildings require elongated windows for balance.
- Use consistent spacing to prevent an unbalanced or cluttered appearance.
- Use consistent spacing to prevent an unbalanced or cluttered appearance.
- Keep a clear hierarchy – Ground-level windows should be larger, while upper-floor windows should be smaller and more uniform..
- Window and mullions should be oriented vertically.

Why it matters: A visually balanced facade feels polished and intentional, increasing a building's appeal.



Transparency & Engagement for Storefronts

- Retail windows should be large and clear to showcase products and invite customers inside.
- Avoid excessive tinting or obstructions—customers should see inside easily.
- Doors should feel inviting, ideally glass-paneled or with side windows for openness.
- Provide a generous amount of windows on all elevations exposed to public view to encourage visual connections between the private and the public realms.
- Window glass should be clear. Painted window glass panes and reflective glass is not permitted.

Why it matters: An uninviting or cluttered storefront can turn customers away before they even step inside. materials, not contrast awkwardly.



Material & Style Coordination

- Doors and windows should match the overall building design – modern buildings use sleek glass and metal, while traditional styles favor wood or detailed trim.
- Frame materials should blend with the facade – aluminum, wood, or painted steel should complement other finishes.
- Avoid clashing styles – ornate windows on a minimalist building can feel out of place.
- Divided window lites or Muntions are encouraged to be used.

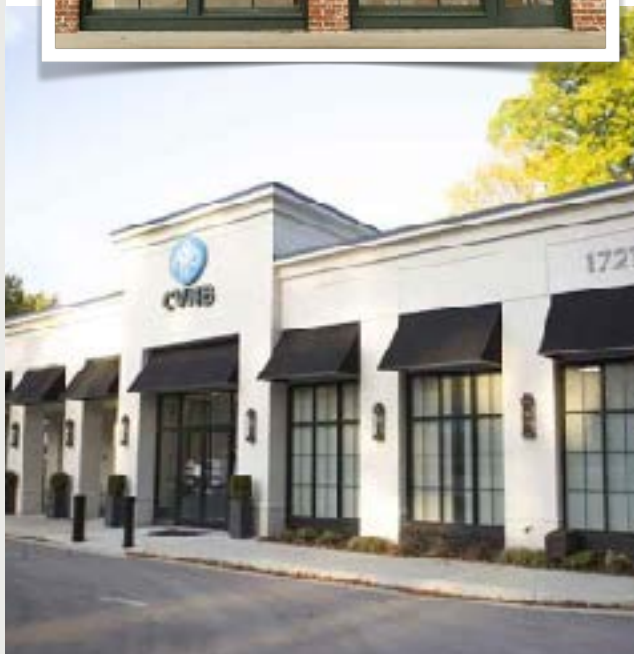
Why it matters: Design consistency strengthens recognition, credibility, and memorability.



Entrance Definition & Visibility

- Main doors should stand out but not overpower the design.
- Use architectural elements (awnings, transoms, lighting) to highlight the entry.
- Retail doors should be recessed slightly to create depth and an inviting entryway.

Why it matters: People are more likely to enter, stay longer, and return when a space feels comfortable and well-designed.



Window openings are too horizontal.



- Window color should be dark bronze
- Use divided lites to promote more detail and character.



- Window openings are square and should be vertically oriented.
- Windows lack mullions and details.

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT

intent

Designing Exterior Equipment with Style and Smarts

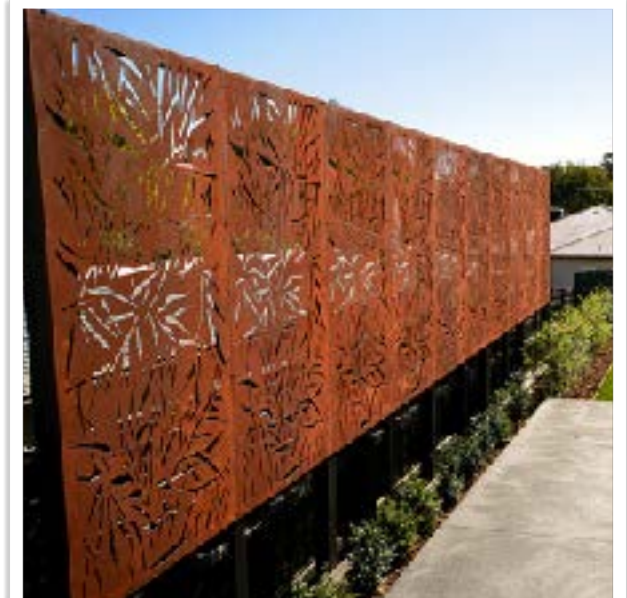
Building equipment (HVAC units, vents, ductwork, and utility boxes) should be concealed in a way that enhances the building's design rather than appearing as an afterthought.

Hidden in Plain Sight

Concealment and Screening

Importance: Enhances the building's aesthetic appeal, reduces visual clutter, and maintains the integrity of the design. Proper screening also minimizes the impact of industrial or mechanical components on pedestrians and neighboring properties .

- Service areas, mechanical units, and utility equipment should be hidden from public view using architectural or landscape screening.
- Dumpster enclosures should match the architectural materials of the principal building and include solid, durable metal gates .
- Chain-link and cyclone fences are not acceptable as screening methods .
- Rooftop equipment should be fully screened using parapet walls or integrated architectural elements .



Integration with Building Design

Importance: Creates a cohesive architectural look, reinforcing the overall design quality. This approach also ensures that auxiliary structures do not appear as afterthoughts but as integrated elements of the development .

- Exterior equipment should be incorporated into the building's design rather than appearing as an afterthought.
- Utility meters, service equipment, and fire risers should be located within the building whenever possible.
- If external placement is necessary, equipment should be painted or finished in a way that complements the building's color palette .
- Screening should be consistent with the architectural style of the building .
- Roof access ladders should be contained within the building; if external, they must be placed in a rear or side elevation and screened from public view .
- Outdoor storage areas must be completely enclosed and screened from all views .
- Exterior freezers and coolers should be integrated into the building's material and color palette .



- Hide utilities with landscape or screen. Paint Ballards with colors that complement the building palette.



- Exposed exterior coolers are not allowed. Needs to blind with architecture or be screened.



- Dumpster enclosures require decorative durable metal gates.



COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

LIGHTING

intent

Designing Exterior Lighting for Impact and Style

Well-designed exterior lighting should enhance a building's aesthetics, respect its architectural integrity, and contribute to a vibrant and inviting urban environment. By following these principles, designers can create visually appealing and functional lighting schemes that elevate the overall character of the built environment.

Lit by Design

Architectural Harmony

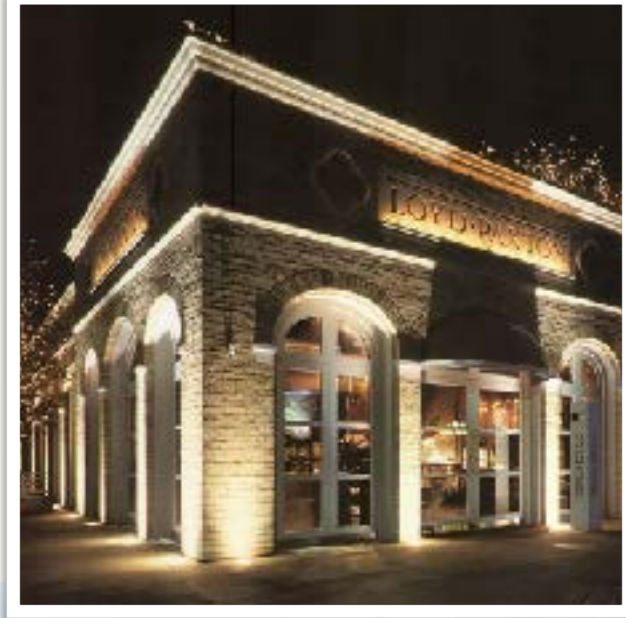
- Match lighting to the building's style .
- The right lighting fixtures can be used as extra detail & ornamentation.
- Be intentional about how the building is lit at night.



“Thoughtful lighting design doesn’t just illuminate a building—it makes it work better, feel safer and makes people want to stay.”

Streetscape Integration

- Coordinate with signage and landscape .
- Maintain even brightness for a cohesive look .



Highlight Key Features

- Use accent lighting on columns, textures, and details
- Backlight elements for dramatic effects.



Balance Function & Beauty

- Blend practical lighting with decorative fixtures.
- Avoid overly harsh or uneven lighting.



Enhance Pedestrian Experience

- Light entryways, paths, and seating areas.
- Use warm tones for a welcoming feel.



- Lights are too bright and misplaced creating uneven light over the canopies.



- Rope-style lights used around openings to draw attention are not allowed.



- Color wall washer lights should be used to highlight buildings or draw attention. It should only enhance and complement the architecture.

Avoid Common Color Mistakes

- ⊘ Avoid using lights that grab attention. It should compliment the architecture.
- ⊘ No "Rope LED" lights in windows.
- ⊘ No "Wall-Pack" style fixtures on pedestrian building sides.
- ⊘

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

CANOPIES & AWNINGS

intent

Elevating Retail Awnings with Timeless Design

Well-designed canopies and awnings enhance a retail building's visual appeal, brand identity, and pedestrian experience while ensuring harmony with the surrounding streetscape and architectural context.

Shading in Style

Proportionality and Scale

- Size appropriately to match the scale of the window or door opening rather than spanning multiple openings .
- Avoid overly large or dominant awnings that become the main architectural feature rather than a complementary element .



Shape and Style Consistency

- Single-sloped, avoiding complex or inconsistent shapes that conflict with the overall architecture .
- For a more classic look, straight-shed awnings are preferred over curved designs .



Material and Color Selection

- Preferred materials include canvas, matte vinyl, or metal that align with the architectural style of the building .
- High-gloss, plastic, or internally illuminated awnings should be avoided .
- Colors should complement the building's overall color scheme, with solid or subtle striped patterns being ideal .
- Awnings shall be opaque and made of canvas, vinyl, or metal with a matte finish.
- Awnings should not be used to draw attention to a building.



Enhancing Pedestrian Experience

- Awnings should provide shade and weather protection without excessively obstructing natural light .
- The projection should generally not exceed five feet unless made of transparent materials to maintain visibility and illumination .
- Integrated lighting should enhance architectural detailing, but avoid illuminating the underside of canopies, which can create excessive glare .



Branding and Signage

- Business signage on awnings should be subtle and secondary, rather than dominating the design .
- Avoid excessive lettering, bright colors, or clashing patterns that distract from the overall building aesthetic .



Integration with the Façade

- Canopies should blend with the building's framework rather than looking like an afterthought .
- Avoid installing awnings solely for visual appeal over solid walls without functional necessity .
- Ensure alignment with adjacent awnings in multi-tenant buildings for a harmonious streetscape .



- Awning is too large and not to scale or style of the architecture.



- Awning is the prominent feature and not a sloped structure.



- Colors are too bright and do not compliment each others or the building's color palette.

INSUTRAIL DESIGN GUIDELINES

INDUSTRIAL architecture should be designed with both the present and the future in mind. Quality design should not only meet individual needs, but should also meet the needs of the community as a whole.



efficiency with style

Why design matters here?

Enhances Brand Identity

A well-designed industrial building conveys professionalism, trust, and corporate presence.

Improves Worker Productivity

Natural light, ergonomic layouts, and aesthetic environments boost efficiency and morale.

Attracts and Retains Tenants

A visually appealing and functional facility is more desirable for long-term leasing.

Increases Property Value

Thoughtful design elevates resale and rental potential in competitive markets.

Optimizes Space & Functionality

Good planning ensures efficient workflows, storage, and accessibility.

Strengthens Community Integration

Industrial buildings that blend with their surroundings reduce visual blight.

Supports Sustainability Goals

Smart material choices and design reduce energy consumption and environmental impact.

Enhances Safety & Security

Strategic layout, lighting, and visibility improve site safety for workers and visitors.

Regulatory Compliance

Meeting aesthetic and zoning guidelines ensures smooth permitting and approvals.

Future-Proofs the Facility

Flexible, well-designed spaces can adapt to evolving industry needs and technologies.

Creating workplaces that Inspire.

How does this help developers and builders?

A well-designed facility also strengthens brand credibility, attracts high-quality tenants and clients, and creates a safer, more enjoyable work environment. In the long run, thoughtful design leads to higher property value, lower operational expenses, and a more competitive business presence in the market.



COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

SITE

intent

Crafting an Industrial Site That Works and Wows

Well-planned site elements elevate industrial design, improve usability, and enhance curb appeal. A thoughtful approach blends practicality with aesthetics, creating a functional yet visually striking industrial space.

Beyond the Box

Site Layout

- Highlight site entrances with unique paving treatments, accent landscaping, and signage that inform visitors of its location and enhances the overall project design.
- Orient buildings in order to address public right of ways.
- Clearly define entrances..
- Create a cohesive visual relationship.



Landscaping & Green Buffers

- Use trees and shrubs to soften industrial edges.
- Create green buffers to screen loading areas.
- Use rolling earth berms and landscaping, aesthetically pleasing masonry low walls, elevation changes or any combination to screen industrial development and operations.
- Create relief to continuous wall planes with trellises, green walls, and landscape frames, and to connect to adjacent development.
- Ensure landscaping complements and extends the design of adjacent properties and amenities.



Screening & Utility Concealment

- Hide dumpsters and docks with fencing or greenery.
- Use perforated metal or textured concrete screens.
- Keep service areas away from main views.
- Screen all mechanical/utility equipment with landscaping or other materials consistent with building design.
- Screen supply yards adjacent to and visible from public streets using a combination of architectural wing walls, portions of the building, decorative screen walls, and a landscape buffer;
- Screen parking lots adjacent to and visible from public streets using a combination of architectural wing walls, portions of the building, decorative screen walls, and a landscape buffer
- Where large expanses of fencing are exposed, screen them with upright shrubs or trellised vines.



Lighting & Security Integration

- Use architectural lighting to highlight features.
- Avoid harsh glare with soft LED lighting.

Signage & Branding

- Keep signage proportional and integrated.
- Use halo-lit, backlit, or engraved signs.
- Match signage materials and colors to the facade.



COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

STYLE & FORM

intent

Crafting Form, Function, and Aesthetic Excellence

Incorporating the architectural character of industrial buildings will vary depending on their use and complexity. Warehousing facilities, due to their volume and repetitive nature must be designed to vary in massing and architectural detail to provide visual interest.

Industrial Elegance

Architectural Identity & Massing

- Design with clean lines and modern, proportional forms to avoid a monolithic, boxy look.
- Use varying roof heights, facade articulation, and material layering to create visual depth.
- Provide articulation of all building façades, to reinforce the concept of **360° architecture**.
- Intentional design effort should be exercised to create forms with visual character.
- Long, unarticulated façades and flat planes should be avoided.



Entryways & Public Frontage

- Clearly define main entrances with large glazing, color accents, and structural features.
- Ensure pedestrian entry points are welcoming, accessible, and well-lit to enhance safety and visual appeal.
- Incorporate bold entrance features, such as recessed entries, extended canopies, or accent walls, to establish hierarchy and identity.



Facade Composition & Detailing

- Break up large, blank walls with windows, vertical/horizontal breaks, or changes in texture and material.
- Consider decorative metal cladding, ribbed panels, or patterned precast concrete to add texture and depth.
- Use architectural reveals, shadow lines, and trim elements to create subtle but effective detailing.



Consistency & Contextual Design

- Align the design with surrounding buildings and industrial developments for a cohesive look.



- Masonry should wrap corners of the building to create more mass than a thin veneer.



- Office areas associated with warehouse and industrial buildings should be incorporated into massing of the building.



- The roof line along the front needs more variation and visual interest. Simply follow the slope of the Pre-engineered structure should be avoided.



COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

MATERIALS & COLORS

intent

From Dull to Dynamic. Making meaningful Impact with Color & Material.

Thoughtful material and color selection enhances durability, reinforces brand identity, and transforms industrial buildings into visually compelling and functional spaces

Beyond the Gray Box

Choose Durable, High-Quality Materials

- Architectural Metal Panels – Sleek, modern, and corrosion-resistant.
- Metal “R” Panels for facades not facing public right of ways
- Precast or Textured Concrete – Strong, low-maintenance, and thermally efficient.
- Glass Curtain Walls – Adds sophistication and maximizes natural light.
- Fiber Cement Panels – Mimics wood or stone with minimal upkeep.
- Brick or Masonry Accents – Provides warmth and timeless appeal.



Break Up Large Surfaces for Visual Interest

- Combine different materials for contrast.
- Use panel variations (vertical/horizontal) to add movement.
- Mix textures (smooth glass + rough concrete) for depth.



Reinforce Brand Identity

- Integrate company colors subtly into accents or trim.
- Use high-tech materials for innovation-driven industries.
- Ensure signage and branding elements blend with the facade.



Select a Modern, Professional Color Palette

- Primary Colors – Neutral tones (gray, black, white, taupe) for a clean look.
- Accent Colors – Deep blue, steel green, or burnt orange for contrast.
- Avoid Neon & Brights – Stick to muted, professional shades.



- Type R metal panels are discouraged. Use dark colors to reduce glare and add character.



- Primary materials and colors shall be subtle, neutral, or natural tones with integrated with accent materials or details.



- The entire color palette should complement each other and be limited to no more than 3 colors for materials.

Selecting durable materials and a strategic color scheme makes your industrial building functional, visually striking, and brand-aligned. Keep it clean, modern, and built to last.

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

DOORS & WINDOWS

intent

**Doors & Windows
can also open profit
by better work
environments, and
curb appeal.**

Choosing high-quality, well-designed doors and windows enhances your industrial building's appearance, functionality, and long-term value.

Framing Visual Success

Doors: Strength & Style

- Main Entry Doors – Glass and metal frames for a modern, inviting look.
- Overhead & Roll-Up Doors – Sectional glass for visibility or colored metal for a sleek finish. Be creative with colors and graphics.
- Pedestrian & Side Doors – Clean-lined aluminum or steel for a cohesive design.
- Canopies & Framing – Use overhangs, contrast trim, or recessed entryways for depth.



Windows: Light & Design

- **Large Glass Panels** – Floor-to-ceiling or clerestory for a high-end look.
- **Symmetry & Placement** – Keep windows evenly spaced for balance.
- **Framing & Finishes** – Slim aluminum or dark metal for an industrial touch.
- Windows should be oriented vertically.

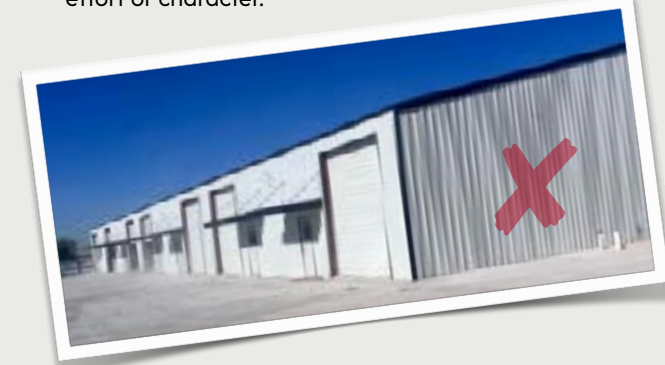


Functional & Visual Appeal

- **Break Up Large Facades** – Use windows to add depth.
- **Highlight Entryways** – Oversized glass doors and sidelights create a focal point.
- **Match Materials & Colors** – Ensure consistency with metal, concrete, or brick exteriors.
- Front elevations shall express a high window to wall ratio.



- Entry needs more openings and windows to create more visual interest at the entry. This entry lacks and design effort or character.



- This facility has zero architectural features or articulation. There needs to be more attention to color and details at the doors and openings.



- Windows need vertical orientation
- Opening do not align or have any exterior organization. .

