

### III. FAÇADE TREATMENT

#### A. Narrative

Building façades frame a street. In so doing, they put shops and architectural elements directly adjacent to the pedestrian's path, and well within the street level cone of vision. As such, additional features and greater detailing of the façade should be provided at the street level for the interest and comfort of the pedestrian. In addition, buildings should provide a visual, and perhaps structural, framework for the orderly presentation of street level businesses and shops. This sense of rhythm will both modulate and syncopate pedestrian travel along the street, providing discrete visual fields of focus. Modulate façades with breaks, setbacks, and other elements in building façades.

In general, if a street's built environment is to remain of interest to the pedestrian, architectural forms and features need to be clear enough to make the whole building easily comprehensible. Within the close view the pedestrian has from the street, however, the provision of detail and the layering of its presentation is essential to invite repeated daily viewings from passersby.

These standards are meant to encourage conservative building designs which are sympathetic to the buildings of the Village of Great Bridge. Toward this end, overall façade proportions as well as the proportions of individual elements (doors, windows, columns, and moldings, belt courses, frieze panels, cornices, etc.) and the character and texture of materials will need to be considered. In the Business District, the intent is to provide building designs which are only narrowly "interpretive" variations of "colonial" architectural styles. Elsewhere, notably, in the Causeway District, wider, more general, "interpretations" of the local architectural styles are encouraged, but buildings should more closely resemble historical reproductions rather than a set of divergent buildings on generally (e.g., through an acknowledgement of general massing, horizontal datum lines, etc.) related to the historic fabric of the original settlement. Still, it should be emphasized, buildings in the Causeway District should not be "reproductions" but rather only limited in the number of variations expressed in any given building.

Façade design should not be overly complicated or monotonous and should respect the functions of the Village and the region. Designs reflecting traditional proportions and elements are encouraged. False façades typical of "themed buildings" and movie sets are not acceptable.





Building façades shall be predominantly brick veneer walls with certain elements of the buildings to be architectural precast, cementitious, siding, accent elements with cedar shakes, stucco, or stucco-like materials, such as correctly used EIFS. Ranges of acceptable masonry coverage are as follows:

- Commercial (office, retail, and hospitality uses) - 70% to 100%
- Residential (including ground floor retail) - 30% to 100%
- Finishes on all elevations must be approximately the same percentage (within  $\pm 5\%$ ), unless variations are proposed as a design feature (ie. corner tower).

Windows shall follow historic guidelines for proportions, i.e., shall be vertical in form. Windows on the ground floor shall be larger than windows on the upper floors. Where muntins are used, they shall be on the exterior and interior sides of the glass, or true divided.



30% - 100% brick.



70% - 100% brick.

## B. Guidelines

1. Provide coordinated building compositions that use a very readable system of building divisions. The ease with which a consistent human scale can be seen or sensed along the urban sidewalk will determine the comfort level and sense of security for the pedestrian at the street.



2. Provide designs that express a base, middle, and top. This provides a visual order to the building. These simple divisions allow the pedestrian to understand the building scale in relation to himself/herself – a component of human comfort.
3. Provide façade designs that allow the base to visually anchor the building to the ground. The expressed height of the base should be proportional to the overall height of the building. The vertical extent of the base lets the pedestrian understand the relative heights of the buildings along the street.
4. Horizontal projections (base, belt courses, frieze panels, cornices) and other linear elements should continue visually from one adjoining building to another. This will provide the greatest sense of enclosure and comfort to the pedestrian.
5. Linear bands need not align precisely; variation can occur - coursings can step up or down, projecting elements can be reversed, and even new lines can be added. Variations will occur, within the field of a single building or along the span of a street block, though the sense of continuity should be maintained.



*A three-part ordering of the building face is achieved at grade with the careful application of building finishes. Note the greater sense of weight the darker finishes provide at the base.*

6. Provide façade treatments with the greatest amount of detail and refinement at the street. A variety of the following features should be incorporated into each building façade design:
  - Recesses or projections
  - Overhangs
  - Peaked or articulated roof forms
  - Raised corniced parapets.
  - Fine Architectural detailing at the building's grade level
  - Arcades
  - Arches
  - Canopies or porticos
  - Parapets over entryways
  - Display windows
  - Integrated landscaping, including the use of planters, and/or seating at recessed areas
7. Façade design should vary along the street block, as opposed to presenting a single face for the block along all or great extents of the street.
8. Building corners should address their street corners with principal entrances, chamfered or curved building corners, or other means that distinguish the building at the corner from the field of the building façade. Towers, turrets, bay windows, or other devices are encouraged as a means of articulating street corners. However, it is not the intention of the guidelines that every corner have a strong “attention-getting” device.
9. Buildings should have their principal pedestrian entrances along the streets.
10. Dominant exterior building materials (exposed to view on public rights-of-way) should be brick, natural stone, architectural metal, architectural concrete, glass, and cementitious siding (lap or shakes) for some residential buildings. Cedar shakes or siding are acceptable for residential buildings. Accent exterior building elements may be anodized aluminum, stainless steel, copper, bronze, brass or factory painted metal. Mortar and caulking colors should be compatible with the predominant material. Provide durable materials at the ground floor to ensure and maintain a high quality built environment.
11. The maximum amount of glazing should be provided at the first and second levels to provide a sense of continuous human presence and of ongoing habitation and activity.
12. Integrate rooflines and articulate prominent rooftops. The tops of flat-roofed buildings should be visually articulated, with projections providing visual interest and shadow lines.
13. Rooftop equipment should be screened or concealed from public view. Rooftop amenities such as garden terraces, outdoor eating areas, or recreational courts and pools that also conceal mechanical and other equipment are encouraged. Rooftop equipment should be neatly organized, taking into account views onto the roof from the other adjacent structures. The roof should be considered as the “fifth façade.”